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SPEAIGHT.

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THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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IRRIGATION IN
THE PUNJAB

IN the engineering supplement of *The Times* for Wednesday last, Mr. R. B. Buckley gives a most interesting account of the gigantic irrigation scheme which the Secretary of India has just sanctioned. As a mere feat of engineering, this plan is well worthy the attention of all intelligent people. But, beyond that, it has far deeper claims on the minds of Englishmen. In such continents as India and Africa, irrigation is of the highest importance. Without it there can be no regularity in the food supply, and consequently there must be that alternation of lean and fat years which brings in its train pestilence and famine. If the crops of India could have been relied upon, there would have been none of those frightful plagues the last of which only occurred a few years ago. They have made gruesome reading of the history of India. But, if the supply of water can be controlled, then there will result not only a notable addition to the food supply, but a regularity in its production that will enable the evils of famine to be avoided. Happily the English as a colonising people have always been celebrated for doing whatever they can to increase the wealth and the food supply of territory brought under their sway. It was not so with the conquerors of old, whose custom it was to exact tribute from the lands that owned their supremacy, and their tradition has survived in the policy of the majority of countries outside England. The reason why continental countries have not been good colonists is that their system is overwhelmed with red tape and officialdom. They do not look so much to improve the status of those whom they govern, as to obtain whatever benefit is possible from their annexations. The reproach urged against England has been the opposite of this. She is said to hold her colonial possessions with too lax a hand, and far from exacting anything from them, is more prone to give than to

receive. Only a little while ago we were reading of the gigantic works that are contemplated on the Upper Nile, and now preparations are being made to erect a counterpart of them on the streams that water the Punjab.

For natural irrigation, India depends on the Monsoon downpour, which sends the rivers down in huge volumes of water, and converts the smallest hill streams into roaring floods. It is when the rainy season has passed and the rivers have shrunk within their banks again that the need for artificial irrigation becomes felt. It is needed mostly for the great wheat crop, which covers about 40 per cent. of the whole irrigated area. It is in January that the rivers fall to their lowest, but even then they bring an abundant water supply if it were properly managed. As Mr. Buckley says, "at the time when such rivers as the Son, the Nerbudda, and the Mahanadi, which have their source in Central India, are carrying only hundreds of cubic feet of water, the rivers which tap the mountain ranges of the Himalayas are carrying thousands." As the snow melts the volume of water increases, and this occurs at a time when the streams which do not rise in the mountains have practically run dry. During the reign of the late Queen Victoria some attempt was made to utilise these waters, and as the effectiveness of the work became visible its operation was gradually extended. "In 1860 about 500,000 acres were irrigated, in 1870 about 1,250,000, in 1880 about 1,500,000, in 1890 about 3,000,000, and in 1901 just 6,000,000 acres received the benefit of the waters of the Punjab rivers." He goes on to show, however, that the waters are far from being exhausted by the canals, and that millions of acres are still in need of irrigation. Some of the land is lying waste or half waste, some of it is cultivated at great expense, and not very efficiently, by water drawn out of deep wells, and some is fertile and productive in good years, but liable to the complete failure of crops and consequent famine. It is with this wide tract of cultivated and partly cultivated and uncultivated land that the Secretary of State is going to deal. It is calculated that the works will be nine years in construction, and will cost over £5,000,000. Close on 2,000,000 acres will be irrigated, and the channels leading the water from the rivers to the villages will be 3,000 miles in length, not including the small village water-courses which will lead from the Government canals to the individual fields. The project will, in fact, deal with an area equal to a third of the whole cultivable area of Egypt.

This bold and striking scheme will be applied to three distinct areas, separated from each other by two of the Punjab rivers. It is rendered the more difficult because some of the rivers are already irrigating as much land as is possible for them. This is the case with the Chenab and the Ravi, the volume remaining to them after providing for the existing works being insufficient for what is required. This is partly true of the Jhelum, on the banks of which lies the first or westernmost tract. It is already tapped by a canal, but the balance is to be directed to the new irrigation works. For this purpose a weir will be built across the Jhelum in the territories of the Maharajah of Kashmir, and by a circuitous and difficult course a canal will lead the water across to the Chenab River. "On its way the first canal will irrigate 345,000 acres in the Gujrat district, the surplus water being discharged into the Chenab River. A second weir will be built across the Chenab River at a point about thirty miles above Wazirabad, and a new canal will draw off a large portion of the discharge of the stream." It is proposed that when the Upper Chenab Canal reaches the Ravi it will be carried below that river and come out on the other side, where it will be called the Lower Bari Doab Canal, and it will irrigate 883,000 acres in the Multan and Montgomery districts. As showing the extraordinary proportions of the scheme it is worth noting that this underground channel will discharge about 6,500 cubic feet a second, or, in other words, about two-thirds of the volume discharged by the Thames at Windsor at its greatest floods, and about six times the ordinary summer discharge of that river. The third district is largely composed of high dry land now covered with jungle, and little used except as a grazing ground for camels. It is expected, however, that when the irrigation is completed it will become as fruitful as other parts of the province, and that where there is now only a desert there will be busy villages and fertile fields. It is a great project, and one that promises increased wealth and prosperity to the people of India and comfort to us, too, since one natural consequence will be to increase that supply of wheat which already comes from India in growing quantities.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Mrs. Trevor-Battye and her child. Mrs. Trevor-Battye is the daughter of Captain Henry Sowerby Middleton, and was married to Captain Trevor-Battye—Hon. Captain in the Army, late Captain 3rd (Militia) Battalion East Lancashire Regiment—in 1902.



Ever a nation was reduced to the very lowest ebb of fortune, Russia surely is in that position to-day. After the disastrous battle of Mukden, the most zealous of her friends must give up hope that her fortunes will be retrieved. Japan has established a supremacy that no effort made during the present war can possibly break down, and the only reasonable course for the Czar and his Ministers to pursue is to recognise that they are beaten, and make the best terms they can with their conquerors. Under any circumstances this would be a necessary measure, but it is much more so just now owing to the activity of the forces of revolt in Russia itself. The country demands rest from external trouble, in order that it may devote itself to the remedy of internal grievances, and to passing such measures as will lead to the contentment and ultimately, let us hope, to the prosperity of the native population. No statesmanship that does not keep this end in view is likely to be of benefit to Russia.

President Roosevelt has been addressing some winged words to his countrymen on the question of wealth. According to him the American millionaire is as undesirable at home as he is abroad, and his ideals are not to be either admired or envied. President Roosevelt is trying hard to impress on the Americans that it is no worthy ambition for a man to strive that he may possess more dollars than anybody else on earth. He sees perfectly well that the devotion to money is materialising, and spoiling the American character, and that great deeds have only come from those nations in which the spiritual side has been developed. Such warnings were obviously needed, but it is a question still remaining to be considered whether even the words of a President can turn re-olute men from a course they have made up their minds to follow. Perhaps the ultimate increase of a wealthy and leisured class may in time supply that balance to mere wealth which the country urgently needs just now.

Mr. Jesse Collings has introduced into the House of Commons a Bill for the promotion of agricultural education and Nature study in elementary schools, which has been printed and distributed. The second clause empowers any local authority to provide means for instruction in Nature study, gardening, dairy-work, agricultural geology, and farming generally. The object of Clause 3 is to empower the local authority to provide collections of books, specimens, and other requirements for this kind of education. No doubt the plan shadowed forth in this measure is one that might be utilised for providing country teaching for country children, and it is hoped that it will meet as much support in the House of Commons as will be able to ensure its enactment.

No one seems to have pointed out the present and visible results in the way of saving in national armaments due directly to Lord Salisbury's wisdom in concluding an alliance with Japan. That alliance freed the Japanese from the risk of having to fight any other Power but Russia unaided, and it guaranteed to the islanders that the Black Sea Treaty would be enforced so far as the sealing of the Dardanelles is concerned. This left the Japanese free to do the best they could for themselves, which, to the surprise of everyone but a very few military experts (and those experts, we are glad to say, Englishmen), has put Russia, our only aggressive neighbour, "out of court" for the next quarter of a century. The natural result was that even a Conservative Government felt safe in reducing the Naval Estimates by three millions this year. Should the Baltic Fleet also be destroyed, it is believed that we can retain our superiority over the fleets of Europe, other than Russia, at a cost of five millions a year less than previously. In other words, Japan's freedom to fight will have taken fivepence off the income-tax.

A project that has a good deal more than merely local interest seems likely to be realised in the South of France. It is the construction of a road exclusively for automobiles between Arcachon and Biarritz. The proposed road is to be of 20 mètres in total breadth, with a 12-mètre track in the centre specially prepared for motor traffic. A bar of sand will divide the two sides of the track, so that cars going in opposite directions will be virtually on separate roads. There will be no meeting of another car. The 4-mètre width on either side it is proposed to use eventually as a track for cycles. The value of such a track as this for motors will be much felt locally, for though the roads in France generally are so admirable, those between Bordeaux and Biarritz are notable exceptions, and Arcachon is at no great distance from the former town, so that the south-going motorist will gain much by the completion of the project. From a larger point of view it has a most suggestive interest, as being a move in the direction of what we all must feel to be the ideal for the motorist himself, for all other kinds of traffic, and perhaps, above all, for the dwellers in the houses along the present roads. Unfortunately it is not often that the land is so readily available as in the case we are noticing, where it is stated to be almost wholly Government property, and but little requisitioning of private holdings will be necessary.

It has been explained in the House of Lords that the decision of the Government to establish the Indian Department for Forestry Instruction at Oxford, on its removal from Cooper's Hill, is solely due to the wooded character of the surrounding country as compared with the neighbourhood of Cambridge or any of the more modern Universities. The reason will be generally recognised as a good and sufficient one in the existing circumstances, though the selection of one University to the exclusion of the rest will inevitably excite a certain amount of criticism. Unfortunately, not even the woods of Wytham and Bagley and Nuneham can supply the proper material for any full or complete silvicultural course, and the forestry students will still be forced to seek a great part of their education and training upon the Continent. But the country round Oxford is, both from the variety of its soil and formation, and its thickly-wooded character, as good a locality for learning the elementary principles of the science as any district in England.

VILLANELLE OF THE SOUTH.

Beside the azure of the bay,
Where Nero's gay tirems once sped,
Your terrace walls rise proudly gray.

And as the night usurps the day,
So Hope by Time lies slain and dead;
Beside the azure of the bay.

We drank the joys of sun-kissed May;
By bowers of roses blazing red,
Your terrace walls rise proudly gray.

We piped the tune of Love's own lay,
Followed his footsteps where he led,
Beside the azure of the bay.

We said that Love should lead for aye;
Below those hills, where olives spread,
Your terrace walls rise proudly gray.

Cold years have gone their dreary way,
And with them Love and Youth have fled;
Beside the azure of the bay
Your terrace walls rise proudly gray.

FRANK HIRD.

The work is going steadily forward of providing the Egyptian Soudan with the fuller means of communication and commerce with the outside world which are essential to its future prosperity. After all its vicissitudes the Berber and Suakim Railway is now in a fair way of being completed in the near future, and a short time ago the Sirdar entered the Red Sea port by rail from the point up country to which it has so far been completed. Meanwhile surveys are being undertaken for other lines of railway, with which it is contemplated to link the Upper Nile to the Red Sea littoral, and preparations are in a more advanced stage for constructing a new port at Sheekh Bargout, to be called Port Soudan. This is at present a spot of no importance whatever, but it appears to be a fine natural site for a harbour of large size. There is no doubt that the next ten years, or even fewer, will witness an immense change in the vast region which seven years ago was still under the Khalifa's barbarous domination.

Following in the track of the numerous other saline lakes which formerly studded a large area of the Western United States, the Great Salt Lake has for some time shown distinct signs of shrinkage. Now, however, a good deal of concern has

been caused in Salt Lake City by the fact that its waters seem to be also losing their saltiness. As their salinity and buoyancy form a substantial asset to the town, owing to the number of visitors who find the lake their chief attraction, the interest which their physical change has aroused is widespread, and not merely scientific. It is locally supposed that the sweetening of the waters is due to the trestle bridge built by the Southern Pacific Railway at Ogden, which is believed to act as a barrier, preventing the waters of the inflowing river from mingling with those of the lake. In a tideless sheet of water such a localisation of the different contributory bodies may be easily set up, and it is very probable that this conjecture is right. Accurate comparative observations on the other side of the bridge have probably not been taken; but here, on the other hand, the same train of causes would naturally result in the water becoming saltier.

The news of the fatality accompanying Lord Lamington's lion-hunt in the Forest of Gir is deplorable in every way. In the first place, there are almost no Indian lions left. The very last are in the Kathywar region, and these have very properly been preserved for a number of years, and will, doubtless, become extinct unless this preservation continues. In the jungle there wild game, especially wild swine and cheetah deer, abound, and the lions live entirely upon these. To allow even a Governor to shoot these lions is to pay him a poor compliment as a sportsman. But in this case the Governor's suite were, apparently, treated to a lion-hunt "on their own," twelve miles off, and one unfortunate officer was killed by a wounded lion. That the pursuit should have been taken up on foot is evidence that the elementary rules of tiger-shooting, which also apply to lion-shooting, were disregarded.

A public-spirited step has been taken by the State of California in offering to hand over for inclusion in the National Park the Yosemite Valley, which has hitherto been a State possession. The chief feature of the valley is the world-famed grove of Sequoias, or "big trees," and the United States Senate, by their acceptance of the Californian offer, have now extended them the same Government protection and supervision as that exercised over the National Park. The necessity for the most effective possible guardianship is all the greater in the case of the "big trees," because they have shown few or no signs of reproducing themselves during the period since their discovery, and they are consequently almost as irreplaceable as the Pyramids. Fortunately, except for the one risk of fire, they seem almost as imperishable.

The heavy rains which marked the close of the week have been very welcome to the farmer, for they filled all the ponds, pools, and shallow wells in something less than forty hours. On low ground the wet was very destructive to young rabbits, the first of which are, as a rule, born early in March, though many appeared much earlier this season. In the Hampshire valleys the chalk streams, like the Itchen and the Test, which usually flow with such even volume, were filled almost to overflowing by the surface water pouring off the land, and an immense number of worms and other food washed into the streams will help to feed up the hungry trout after months of short commons during the winter. It is noticed this spring that grayling have been brought into the London markets for sale. The season for grayling is really over; but the fact shows that this fish is on the increase generally.

The endeavour of an honorary committee to obtain an independent enquiry by Government into the feasibility of a Thames Barrage to utilise the waters of our national river seems in every way worthy of public support. County Councils in several of the Home Counties are at last awake to the serious, almost irreparable, damage done to their districts, notably those of the Kentish Darenth and the Hertfordshire rivers, by the tapping of the deep-level natural reservoirs. The only possible alternative to such a scheme would be to go far afield to the sources of the Wye, plans for which were got out some years ago. During winter floods millions of gallons are running past to the sea, which, dammed up, would be more than sufficient to satisfy this mighty city's needs the year round, besides preventing the damage at present caused by floods to property and health in the Thames Valley. Claiming, as we do, among our fellow-countrymen the engineers of the Nile Barrage and many a mighty Indian work besides, any obstacles to the success of such a project should be easily overcome.

Wild ducks are now all paired, and many of them are laying. The present seems a very favourable moment for proprietors having rights on opposite banks of rivers, or who

own large extents of water meadows, or of fresh-water marshes, to come to a friendly agreement as to the preservation of wild-fowl in such spots, and as to how and when they shall shoot them. In these places the ducks are really wild, and nothing adds more to the beauty of the marshes and meadows in the spring than the sight of the pairs of mallards that swim or fly by the main river and the "carriers" in the meadows, or conduces more to sport later on. The Wild Birds' Protection Acts have been an immense help to the birds. Formerly they were constantly shot in the light evenings in March, as the pairs circled round in flight after the female left her eggs. Now to do so is a misdemeanour, punishable by a fine, no matter who the offender is.

In March the pairing time of the wolves begins, and as these at the Zoo are not able to go forth to seek mates their howls fill the midnight air. On Saturday afternoon this dreadful noise, which seems to be perfectly understood by horses and cattle by inherited instinct, was so loud, being carried by the high wind, that a horse near Gloucester Gate was stamped by it. The only two animals besides the wolf for which domesticated animals never seem able to conquer their aversion, are the camel and the bear. The former is a case of pure natural aversion. It has been noticed that when the camels in a travelling menagerie have been tethered at any particular spot, horses will shy and refuse to go near it, even after the camels have gone on their way with the rest of the show to another town.

SPRING ON THE COTSWOLDS.

I dreamed to-day of those far hills,
Green spaces that the glad sun fills,
Beyond the gray of square and street
Where spring comes now with hurrying feet,
Lavish of bud and blossoming,
And stir of soft things on the wing.

In wooded nooks of wind-swept hills
Spreads the gold glint of daffodils,
And wild and white, like scattered snow,
The delicate pale wind-flow'rs blow,
And silver chalices unfold
'Mid woven webs of rose and gold.

And from those spacious silences
I hear the sob of swaying trees,
Like magic strains of wino-played lute;
I hear the throstle's fairy flute,
The whisper of the falling rain
On growing grass of wold and plain,
And murmuring across my dream
The music of the swelling stream . . .
Sweet sounds that dull the city's stir
To me—the city's prisoner!

ISABEL CLARKE.

The recent gales have been remarkable for the immense number of sea urchins, or "sea eggs," thrown up on the coast of Northumberland and on the eastern shores of Scotland. The "sea eggs," after their buffeting by the waves, are cast up smooth upon the shore. But in their perfect state they are covered with sharp spines, sometimes one-third of an inch long. These spines can all be moved just as can the prickles of a hedgehog, and in some degree assist the creature to move. But the way a "sea egg" walks is peculiar, and highly characteristic. It will be noticed that the spines do not cover all the surface. This is divided up into segments, like a rough-rinded melon. The narrow segments are pierced with holes, which are very easily seen in fossil specimens and in those washed ashore which are denuded of prickles. Through these small holes the "sea eggs" protrude little tubes, which act as feet in the following curious way: the animal inflates the tubes in the water from little suckers at the back, and in this way it pushes itself forward. The tubular feet are fitted to every side of the "urchin," which is thus enabled to move in any direction it pleases.

Just at this time, when so many of the wild places of the world are being decimated of their natural stock of big game, the attention of the shooters of such quarry may be attracted by a statement in a recent number of the *Lucknow Gazette*, to the effect that in Burmah the authorities are offering rewards of £2 13s. a head for every tiger killed, £1 6s. for every leopard and panther, and 11s. for every bear. Naturally the actual value of the rewards will not prove an incentive to the British shooter, but he will gladly accept the offers as evidence that his quarry must be in some abundance if it is worth the while of the authorities to propose them. It suggests a condition of affairs that differs widely from that which prevails in so many districts

where game laws of a constantly-increasing stringency are limiting more and more strictly the number of game of each kind that the shooter is allowed to kill.

Evidence of the continued coldness of the season in latitudes where we expect it to be genial may be gathered from the high price of the flowers that come from the South of France. In many parts the degrees of frost in the past winter were greater

than ever have been registered before, even within the rather elastic memory of "the oldest inhabitant," and the nurserymen have had much ado to keep their outdoor stock alive at all. Another industry that has been languishing, because of adverse weather conditions, is that of the sardine-fishers. It is always fluctuating in its results, partly because of the seeming caprice of the movements of the little fishes, and also in part because the men cannot work their nets when the sea is rough.

THE SHADOW.

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, down by the sea?
Who is it callin', yonder, callin' to me?
Last night a shadow came up to the rowan-tree,
And *Muirnean*, it whispered, *Muirnean*, *I'm waiting for thee!*"

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, down by the shore?
Who is it callin', yonder, callin' sore?
Last night I came in from the rowan an' shut the door,
But some one without kept whisperin' the same thing o'er and o'er."

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, here, close by?
Who is it callin', whisperin', here, so nigh?
Give me my shawl, Mary, an' don't whimper an' cry:
I'm going out into the night, just to look at the sky."

*Mary—Mary—Mary—*wailed the wind wearily:
*Mary—Mary—Mary—*wailed the rain in the tree:
One! Two! Three! ticked the clock—*One! Two! Three!*
Out in the darkness rose the calling of the sea.

FIONA MACLEOD.

THE WOOD-CUTTER.

OF all crafts, that of the woodman should, with some few others of like honourable age, take precedence by right of ancient pedigree. For the wood-cutter at work to-day in English woods can claim as his mate in stroke and tool, in wedged trunk and close-trimmed stem, the Assyrian who still lustily cuts his date palms on the sculptured slabs of Koyunjik; Odysseus felling his twenty trees and trimming them with "axe of bronze"; pious Æneas, whose "sharp axe rings upon the oak" as he builds Misenus' funeral pyre on the Cumean shore. And many a mediæval "wight" who, caught by the master hands of German and Florentine engravers, stands yet before us as alert to "hew on a tre" as when handling axe and billhook 600 years ago. And in the depths of rustic superstition the labourer of modern Europe still knows the dread that moved the Roman workman to panic flight when laying axe unwittingly to the sacred tree of the great goddess Kybele—a panic natural enough when not only for seer and poet, but for every leathern-jerked peasant

"holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire."

Wood-felling to our modern ears carries chiefly a sound of sylvan quiet. Not so in the early days of the craft. The Assyrian date palms, which were cut through and then pushed over by the hands of soldiers (the Assyrian intelligence does not seem to have risen to tying a rope to the tree-top), bring us an echo of savage warfare; for the Assyrian armies devastated a conquered country not only by fire and sword, but also by destruction of the valuable trees, more especially the highly-prized date palms. Other trees were treated similarly or denuded of their branches.



A WOODMAN.
(From Painting on Greek Vase.)

To the early Greek and Roman the ring of the wood-cutter's axe would be often a sound not of woodland peace, but of mourning, in that many logs were needed for the building of the funeral pyres. Who can forget the felling of the forest in the twenty-third book of the "Iliad," when Achilles, mourning over the dead body of Patroklos, as "never again shall second grief thus reach my heart while I remain among the living," desires Agamemnon that, with the morning, he "rouse the folk to bring wood and furnish all that it beseemeth a dead man to have when he goeth beneath the misty gloom"? So, after sleep had taken hold of him, that night lying alone in an open place where the waves were breaking on the shore, "deep sleep that fell about him easing the cares of his heart," came to him the spirit of Patroklos, and standing above his head spake to him and bade him give, with other dues, the due of fire. Then spake Achilles,

"all night long hath the spirit of hapless Patroklos stood over me, wailing and making moan, and charged me everything that I should do, and wondrous like his living self it seemed." Then rosy-fingered Morn shone forth on them, and Lord Agamemnon sped mules and men from all the tents to fetch wood. And they went forth with wood-cutting axes in their hands, and well-woven ropes, and before them went the mules, and uphill and downhill and sideways and across they went. But when they came to the spurs of many-fountained Ida, straightway they set them lustily to hew high foliated oaks with the long-edged bronze, and with loud noise fell the trees. Then, splitting them asunder, the Achæans bound them behind the mules, and they tore up the earth with their feet, as they made for the plain through the thick underwood. And all the wood-cutters bare logs, and on the shore they threw them down in line, where

Achilles proposed a mighty tomb for Patroklos and for himself.

Have ever any craftsmen made so splendid a figure as these Homeric woodmen at work in the rosy morning light on many-fountained Ida, hewing lustily among the noise of falling trees, guiding the plunging mules through the brushwood, laden with logs for the funeral pyre that should "speed a noble comrade forth into the realms of Hades"?

From straining mule teams and crash of falling timber, we turn to a quieter scene in the "Odyssey," as the single figure of Odysseus stands felling his raft-logs, when he prepares to sail from that "far-off isle" in the "sea of violet blue," whereon Calypso held him consuming his heart in eight years' captivity. For when those eight years were accomplished, on command of the gods that he sail "on a well-bound raft," Calypso "considered of the sailing of Odysseus the great-hearted. She gave him a great axe, fitted to his grasp, an axe of bronze double edged, and with a goodly handle of olive wood fastened well. Next she gave him a polished adze, and she led the way to the border of the isle where tall trees grew, alder and poplar and pine that reached unto heaven, seasoned long since and sere that might lightly float for him. . . . And he set to cutting timber and his work went busily. Twenty trees in all he felled, and then trimmed them with the axe of bronze, and deftly smoothed them and over them made straight the line." The Greek vase-painter, who on a fifth century vase has drawn for us the woodman deftly trimming his felled tree, might well have in mind this Homeric picture.

Yet another tale of heroic wood-felling appears in a fifth century Greek vase-painting, wherein is told for us the story, in two acts, of how a heavenly messenger arrives in much haste to warn Syleus that Heracles comes anon to ruin his vineyard; and how the hero, absorbed in his destruction of the trees, is meanwhile bereft of his lion skin and club, with which Syleus's daughter Xenodike makes off post haste and with no little elation.

Our next wood-cutter is but a Roman echo of the Achæan mourners for Patroklos. Virgil tells us how Æneas is bidden by the Sybil to find the unburied body of a comrade, and to accord due funeral rites to the dead, if he would indeed gain entrance to

powerful, links the classic woodcraft with mediæval, and, indeed, with quite modern thought; and puts before us vividly the terrors of the woodman's life when trees, for aught he knew, might bleed humanly at blow of his axe, or visit dire misfortune on him if not duly propitiated. For to simple minds in all ages and all lands, trees have appeared as the bodies incorporate or transient, of powerful dæmons, or of the spirits of the dead. Therefore, many and complicated are the rules for safely handling, and if need arise, for felling these tree-persons; and rash woodmen



HUMAN TREES.
(Fifteenth Century Venetian Woodcut.)

have stood trembling and terror struck, from the days of Æneas down to the modern German peasant.

For the tale of Æneas's terror we must turn again to Virgil. In the third book of the "Æneid" the hero is uprooting saplings in a Thracian grove, when

"Lo, a ghastly sight was seen
Soon as a tree from earth I rend,
Dark flowing drops of blood descend
And stain the ground with gore."

Æneas stands terrified; and trembles, yet more aghast, as he hears a voice rise from the earth, "a lamentable sound," declaring

"Trojan not alien is the blood
That oozes from the upturn wood,"

and disclosing that below lies the body of the murdered Polydorus. Twelve hundred years later we have, enshrined in the "Golden Legend," another tree of half-human attributes, and wholly human malevolence, cut down at the word of St. G  n  vi  ve, and gruesome is the tale of that wood-cutting: "In the time that the city of Paris was assieged . . . many died for hunger. The holy virgin (St. G  n  vi  ve), that pity constrained her, went to the Seine for to go fetch by ship some victuals. When she came into a place of Seine whereas of custom ships were wont to perish she made the ship to be drawn to the rivage and commanded to cut down a tree that was in the water and she set her to prayer. Then as the ship would have smitten upon the tree, it fell down, and two wild heads grey and horrible issued thereout which stank so sore that the people there were envenomed by the space of two hours, and never after perished ship there, thank be to God and to his holy saint." Our own English chronicler, Capgrove, records how, a century later, hewn trees could suffer humanly in Northumberland. We retain his own spelling: "In this year [1384] on the XX day of August on the feast of St. Oswyn, the King being at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a wright hew on a tree, which schuld long to a schip; and at every strook ran oute blood, as it had be of a beste. He bethought himself of the festful day, and left his wark. His felaw stood beside, having no reverens to this myracle took the ax and smet, and anon blood ran oute."

Here the story would seem to have been adopted by the Church as warning against the profanation of holy days. And we find it again adopted and immortalised in the vision of one greater than Virgil, and in words that no "Legenda Aurea" may equal. For, not many years before the grim experience of these two Northumbrian "felaws," Dante was writing, in the fourteenth canto of the "Inferno," of how he came into a pathless wood of dusky colour, and with branches gnarled and warped, the trees whereof bore for fruit withered poison twigs; ". . . Already I heard wailings uttered on every side and saw no one to make them . . . then I stretched my hand somewhat forward and plucked a little branch from a great thorn; and the trunk of it cried: 'Why dost thou rend me?' and when it had grown dark with blood it again began to cry: 'Why dost thou tear me? Hast thou no breath of pity? Men we were, and now are turned to



ASSYRIANS DESTROYING DATE PALM.

Hades, "where never living soul finds way," and there win speech with his father. Turning from the Sybil's cave, Æneas beholds on the seashore the body of the drowned Miseneus. So he hastens with his followers to cut down trees for building up his comrade's funeral pyre.

Two hundred years later we have yet another classic wood-cutting in the coin of Myra, of the third century A.D., on which is depicted, in vivid fashion, the self-defence of the goddess Kybele and her tree, when attacked by impious hands.

This tree, half wood, half spirit, and wholly angered and

trees. Truly thy hand should have been more merciful had we been souls of serpents . . . so from that broken splint words and blood come forth together."

"Perchi mi scerpi?" that cry of the Florentine spirit, tree-bound in hell, has its faint echo throughout the world. The Red Indian medicine-men profess to have heard the wailing of the trees under the axe. And the human voice of the tree in pain sounds in the England of the seventeenth century, for does not Aubrey substantially relate how, when an oak is being felled, "it gives a kind of shriek or groanes that may be heard a mile off, as it were the genius of the oak lamenting. E. Wyld, Esqre., hath heard it severall times."

Thus the form of the poet's vision appears also in the belief of the peasant and the savage; and when once we realise that to the barbarous mind a tree may well be but the outward form, or the lodging, of some spirit or human soul, we cease to wonder at the wide diffusion on the earth's surface of bleeding and wailing trees, or at the various means by which the wood-cutter to this day seeks safety should he be compelled to slay the fibrous body or destroy the haunted dwelling-place. Such tree-persons are figured vividly for us in the old Venetian woodcut of Poliphilo, printed in his magnificent *Hypnerotomachia* of 1499; here, in visible procession, the tree trunks, vegetable and inert, gradually assume human form, till the final stage of fair wood-nymph be reached, on whose body no woodman's axe could smite. As the

cinque-cento Venetian artist drew, so the peasant of to-day believes. In modern Dalmatia certain trees are "possessed, and whoever fells one of them must die on the spot or fall sick for all his days"; and if a woodman fears that a tree which he has felled is one of this sort, he must cut off the head of a live hen on the stump of the tree with the very same axe with which he cut down the tree. This will protect him from all harm. The modern Greek

woodman, when felling a tree which he regards as possessed, is most careful as it falls to prostrate himself humbly and in silence, lest the spirit should chastise him as it escapes; and sometimes he will place a stone on the stump of the tree to prevent the egress of the spirit. The kindlier German woodman will make a cross upon the stump, while the tree is falling, in the belief that this enables the spirit of the tree to live upon the stump. In Gilgit it is usual to sprinkle goat's blood on a tree of any kind before felling it. The modern German woodman, and the Gilgit savage overseas, would alike perfectly understand why, as Cato tells us, before thinning a grove a Roman farmer must piously

A PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE.

sacrifice a pig to the god or goddess of the trees. On a beautiful Greek vase the classic preliminary to wood-felling is given for us with all the vase-painter's delicate and comprehensive art. Here pig and grove, altar, server and priest live for us as vividly as though no twenty centuries stood between us and that pious sylvan rite. A quaint side-light on the fact that trees should be indeed handled wisely and with due ceremony is shown by the Samagitiens' belief that if anyone injured certain groves the spirits would make his hands or feet crooked. And the dangers of the

primitive wood-cutter's life, be he ancient Roman or modern peasant, come before us yet more vividly in the strange fact that down to 1859 there stood a sacred larch tree at Nauders in the Tyrol which was thought to bleed when it was cut. "Moreover, it was believed that the steel pierced the woodman's body to the same depth that it pierced the tree, and that the wound on his body would not heal until the bark closed over the scar on the trunk. So sacred was this tree that no man might even cut timber near it, and to curse, scold, or quarrel in its neighbourhood was regarded as a sin liable to supernatural punishment on the spot." No craft to be lightly pursued, truly, that of the woodman of ancient or mediæval Europe, or of modern savage lands.

But for serio-comic relief to these grim horrors of wild heads emerging grey and terrible, of bleeding branch and shrieking trunk, we may turn to two bits of savage woodcraft, full of that queer consciousness that, mighty though the powers be, yet human skill may, perchance, outwit them. Primitive thought as to tree-cutting includes the belief that the spirit can quit the tree at pleasure or at need, so the "wily negro of the Slave Coast who wishes to fell an ashorin tree, but knows he cannot do so as long as the spirit remains in the tree, places a little palm oil on the ground as a bait, and then, when the unsuspecting spirit has quitted the tree, to partake of this dainty, hastens to cut down its late abode." This foolish tree is at least credited with some greedy sense; but the woodmen of Dutch Sumatra openly hoodwink their forest spirits. When wishing to clear a piece of woodland, these wood-cutters proceed to the middle of the wood, stoop down, and pretend to pick up a letter. Then the woodman, "unfolding a bit of paper, reads aloud an imaginary letter from the Dutch Government, in which he is strictly enjoined to set about clearing the land without delay. Having done so, he says: 'You hear that, spirits; I must begin clearing at once, or I shall be hanged.'"

The mediæval-minded woodman had not only to beware of meddling with haunted trees; he must further assure himself that his time of felling be a propitious one. So we learn from a seventeenth century Italian priest and preacher, one Paul Segneri, who thus discourses in a Lenten sermon: "When people are going to cut down a tree for the use of the artificer . . . they go with a hundred scrutinies and examine whether it is sound, whether it is seasoned, above all whether it is cut at its proper time, as for instance when the moon is on the wane."



WOOD-CUTTERS AND SACRED TREE.



FLORENTINE WOODMAN, FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Hedged about with supernatural fears and punishments, the woodman's craft had further to be exercised with due regard to the mundane penalties of Manor Law. Old Court Rolls bear testimony to the restrictions under which he laboured. Thus at a "Court General on Tuesday next after the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, 14 Edw. IV.," we read how one William Takson, who held lands "in Wymbildon called Bowhres . . . made great waste (unlicensed) in cutting down and selling 500 tall wood [*i.e.*, billets]. Therefore he is amerced." Again, at a Court of the Manor of Wimbledon, May 27th in the 14th of Henry VII.: "The Homage present . . . that Robert Hunt, as farmer of the Abbot of Westminster unjustly entered the common near Bigden Common in Wymbyldon and cut unjustly two cartloads of underwood in saplings"; his fine, the margin adds, "excused because he is dead." In a Court of Edward VI. the "Homage of Putnehithe" enforces a fine of 20s. for felling trees under the height of 9ft.; and in Philip and Mary it was forbidden to make "on any of the commons any wood called baven" (faggot wood) under penalty of 3s. 4d. These local wood-cutting laws were, however, tempered with mercy, for under date of 31st of Elizabeth a Court Roll records that "Walter Wight cut seven bavons upon the Heath against the order; but because he is poor, it was remitted for this time."

Copse-cutting is, indeed, to this day one of the harvests of the year for country labourers. An interesting branch of such copse-work is the craft of the hoopmaker, who with his mate will earn as much as 25s. a week, setting up his primitive plant, called a "brake," in the woods; and if the season be fine, while on the job, sleeping out in the woodland in a hut made of bundles of rods and chips. The copse-ware workers include also those makers of wooden-thatch, from "chips," so pleasantly figured for us in Miss Jekyll's pages. Her sketch of the old thatcher brings before us a woodland craftsman after Ruskin's heart: "It was a long job, and he took his time (although it was piece-work), preparing and placing each handful of chips as if he were making a wedding bouquet. He was one of the old sort—



M. Léon.

MODERN WOOD-CUTTING.

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no scamping of work for him; his work was as good as he could make it, and it was his pride and delight." When asked for his bill "the old man brought it made out on a hazel stick . . ." This is how it runs in notches about ½ in. long, and dots dug with the point of the knife. It means: "To so much work done, £4 5s. od."

"IIXX-I; IIXXXX-IIA IIIIAXX, IIXX."

Just such a tally, surely, might the Achæan woodman have kept of the trees cut with his axe of bronze, and deftly smoothed with polished adze.

That old world, haunted by tree spirits, with their kindred

housed in water and mountain and beast and bird, was, perchance, a world wherein life stepped with a quicker pulse, moving warily between adventure on either hand, than in these present days. Now, every "Nature student" of six weeks' "study" will tell you that a tree is a composition of cellular tissues and vibrovascular bundles. Now, the dryad and the woodsprite are slain, not by the heedless wood-cutter duly tortured for his crime, but by that schoolmaster abroad and unabashed who never yet had grace to echo Wordsworth's cry for "creeds outworn," so might he but see the gods walking as of old down forest glades, or on the "many-fountained" hills. Yet, for some, the



M. Léon.

IN THE COPPICE.

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woodland depths are still untainted by that baneful pedant. For them there is yet, in the forest, silence and something of awe. "In the woods," said Emerson, "we return to reason and faith." So the philosopher, and all who will, within sound of the woodman's axe, or where between tall stems the blue smoke curls up from the brushwood fire, may find

"A quiet place
Where we may dream the hours away and be content."

G. M. GODDEN.

JOTTINGS FROM AN OLD COURT ROLL.

BURIED among the archives of the Lord of the Manor, and accessible only through certain formalities and the payment of heavy fees, lie the ancient Manor Rolls of "Wymbildon," "Puttenhyth," "Rokehampton," and the adjacent districts. Written on parchment, in Latin illegible to any but the practised eye, these musty Rolls yet preserve for us the old dissensions between manorial lord and encroaching commoner as vividly as though the legal Latin of Edward IV. were the paragraphs of a morning paper. Here the prosaic slopes of Wimbledon Common, the nicely-trimmed brushwood, the aggressive scarlet of the golfer on his toy lawn, give place to vivid pictures of wild heathland and oak woods roamed by cattle, sheep, and pigs; of trespassing peasants wielding axe and billhook in defiance of "twelve free Jurors of the Great Assize"; of hungry peasants collecting crab apples, unlicensed; of encroaching ecclesiastics, duly amerced by the said Lord of the Manor; in short, of a Wimbledon Common and "Puttenhyth" claiming sturdily rights of commonage 500 years ago.

Quaint and many were the debatable points in the "reign of King Edward the Fourth after the conquest," as the first extant Roll stands dated, decided between the tenants round the common and the then Lord of the Manor. Pigs were forbidden to run loose or "unrung"; furze and thorns were only to be cut by licence; the very acorns were preserved under the

manorial rights. Thus we read how at a Court on "Friday in the Feast of St. Martin," 1464, "Robert Hardyng occupies the Common there with five pigs, and he beats the oaks and collects acorns of the lord without license of the lord." Doubtless Robert Hardyng was duly amerced to the full value of his acorns. Still harder was the case cited before a Court "on Friday in the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross," in 1471: "Amercement 2^d—Also the Jury aforesaid present that William Wyght and Isabella his wife unjustly collected crabs and wildyngs [*i.e.*, wild apples] on the common of Wymbildon; and are not tenants of the Lord, &c. Therefore they are amerced." To the modern mind it would seem that the "Lord" might more profitably have kept the Feast of Holy Cross by a remission of that 2^d. The undue pasturage of cattle, sheep, and pigs on the Common was a constant offence. Thus we find that "The twelve free Jurors of the Great Assize of the Lord the King say upon their oath that John Veisy of Wymbildon has 8 pigs unwrung overturning the pasture of the Common there to the common nuisance." The said John Veisy being amerced 6d. And again, John Hood "overburthens the common pasture of Rokehampton with cattle," wherefore he is amerced 4d. A heavier penalty awaited one John Hoke, who "overburthens the common at Puttenhyth with his sheep . . . who has a day that he may cause his sheep aforesaid to be removed before the Feast of St. Thomas the Martyr next to come,



O.V. WIMBLEDON COMMON.

under penalty of £10." Sheep were still pastured on Wimbledon Common some few years ago, wandering heedless of golf balls and of caddies shouting "fore," and making many a pleasant rustic picture when drinking at the little Beverley Brook (once, etymologists tell us, the Beaver-brook), but they are now no longer to be seen on the "improved" Common of to-day.

Ecclesiastical dignitaries appear as offenders in the matter of trespass, and are duly fined. Thus, at a Court held "at Mourtlake, on Friday next after the Feast of Pentecost," in 1469, we read that the Dean of St. Paul, London, "overburthens the Common of Puttenhithe with his sheep, and he is not tenant there, to the common injury." Therefore was the Dean amerced 40d. Other times, other manners. Wimbledon Common still stands hedged about with many a protecting rule, but the local authorities of to-day hardly expect to find in their list of offenders cathedral deans and parish priests. As we have seen, the Dean was fined 40d. for his erring sheep. At a Court held on "Tuesday next after the Feast of Whitsuntide," in 1478, we find "Robert the Priest of Mourtlake" fined 4d., in that he, with seven others, "ignited intentionally on the Common [of Wymbildon] many oaks and saplings." The Bank Holiday Cockney, who loves to see the blazing furze-patch, regardless of the blackened eyesore that he leaves behind him, had thus, it would seem, his fifteenth century prototype. We wish that the punishment of "Robert the Priest" and his accomplices might, translated into modern coinage, fall on all perpetrators of furze-burning. In 1465 we again have an ecclesiastic appearing in offence, according to the finding of twelve jurors, who "present that the Prior of Charterhouse entered the Common of the Lord at Mourtlake, and there dug and carried thence 40 cartloads of sand without licence." The Prior was therefore amerced 8d. Yet another dignitary, no less a man than the "Master of the Hospital of St. Thomas the Martyr in Southwark," appears before the Court for enclosing certain common land "called Sanders lying in Wymbildon," which was common pasturage to all tenants of Wimbledon between the Feasts of St. Michael and the Purification of St. Mary, "from the time to which the memory of man exists not to the contrary," as the old wording has it. The undue felling of copse wood and of oaks is a repeated offence. The copses of the Common, still beautiful and still unspoilt by Cockney improvements, were jealously preserved by these Courts of Edward IV. Quaintest among these cases stands that of one Richard Hooke, who "on the vigil of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist last, cut down one cartload of green trees, and sold them at Puttenhyth, whom it was commanded to distrain." Doubtless that cartload of green trees were for the "midsummer trees" used in folk-lore custom on the mystic night of St. John Baptist Day, and this entry in our English Manor Roll recalls the tall, straight firs felled by young men in the woods in Bohemia, to be decked and garlanded and, lastly, set fire to on Midsummer Eve night, or the Silesian custom of decking every door with birchen saplings on the morning of Midsummer Day. Such birchen saplings doubtless grew then ready to the hand of the unlicensed woodman hoping to escape the keen eyes of the Common keepers, as



A PATHWAY AT WIMBLEDON.

their descendants grow to this day. The Common may, indeed, now boast of its birch trees, seemingly impervious to the yearly encroachments of London smoke and fog, white and slender and brave in gay spring green as when, "in the reign of King Edward the Fourth after the Conquest," it was indeed a woodland and a heath, liable to encroachments from invading Deans and Priors, and jealously guarded by Juror and Reeve, beadle and "headborough."

FROM THE FARMS.

HAND-FEEDING LAMBS.

IN every flock of considerable size there will always be one or two, if not more, lambs which will need to be brought up by hand, and a word or two upon the matter at this season may be useful. This is necessary for a variety of reasons, the chief of which is the death of the ewe during the operation of lambing. In large establishments, where lambing is continually taking place at this time of the year, the shepherd is often able to foist a lamb or two on to ewes whose own progeny have died. Sheep, however, in this respect are very knowing, and frequently refuse to take them for some time. One practice for inducing the ewe to do so is to clothe the stranger in the skin of her own dead lamb before it is introduced into the pen. The old one, by the acute sense of smell with which all domestic animals seem to be endowed, is able to detect in the strange youngster some resemblance to her own little one, and allows it to suck contentedly, and in time guards it as jealously as if it were her own. This, however, cannot always be contrived, and then the orphan lambs have to be fed on cow's milk, which, if properly managed, is quite satisfactory, and six months later it will be impossible to tell the hand-reared ones from the others, except that the former are much tamer and more familiar. The milk is either given warm, as it comes from the cow, or is heated up to that temperature, and the lambs soon take it readily after a lesson or two. This is given by letting them suck the fingers which are dipped into the milk, and they are soon brought round to take it from the teat of the bottle as if it were the most natural way in the world. Care must be taken that the bottle and apparatus are kept perfectly sweet and clean, and they must be thoroughly washed after each meal. It will be necessary to feed them at first several times a day, the first meal being given early in the morning and the final one late at night. As the lamb gets older the number may be reduced to twice a day, and it will be well to teach it to feed on other foods, such as a little grass and bran or cake-dust, as soon as it will take these. As to the quantity of milk to be given, a little judgment is all that is required in regulating this, but more lambs are killed by kindness in this particular than through stinginess. The rearing of lambs in this way is not likely to be a financial success, if all the labour and trouble is taken into account, but having got the lambs, it seems only right that they should be kept alive and, if possible, reared.

TURKEY-FARMING.

In the new number of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society there is a very practical and useful article on the rearing of turkeys. It begins with a short summary of the characteristics of the various breeds. The first reference is to the variety that used to be called black Norfolk, to which, in its day, was accorded the highest place for quality. The turkeys in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridge still "command the highest prices" and stand in the front rank, though the larger specimens have been displaced by the American bronze. The older breed has lost vigour by inbreeding. Black turkeys are largely bred in France. It is probable that the black turkey was crossed with the American bronze to produce the Cambridge bronze. The average weights for this variety are about 24lb. for cocks and 16lb. for hens. The American bronze has been in England for about 100 years, and is by many considered the hardiest of the turkey family. The white turkey in America is called the white Holland, although it is widely distributed in South Europe, especially in France, Austria, and Hungary. The writer strongly recommends the Cambridge bronze variety, and the weights of breeding birds, he says, should be, cocks from 18lb. to 22lb., hens from 12lb. to 17lb., in accordance with age. In regard to the method of breeding, very little favour is shown to Mr. Tegetmeier's plan, as the following quotation will show: "Much has been written in favour of what is called the natural method of keeping turkeys, namely, allowing them to breed in the woods as they would in a wild state. There can be no question that such a system, where possible, ensures a greater amount of vigour in the stock and in the young birds than if kept upon an ordinary farm, whilst there is a flavour in the flesh thus produced which is exceptional. For the purpose of securing fresh, virile blood, this plan is deserving of all support. But turkeys bred under these conditions, so far as my observation goes, do not attain the size required upon the markets, and they would not take at all kindly to fattening. Further, it is

questionable whether turkeys can be produced profitably in this country under such conditions."

FEEDING YOUNG TURKEYS.

On this important question the writer is, we think, sound and practical. At first he tells us the object should be to maintain the poults in hard condition, which can best be secured by giving them as much liberty as possible, and encouraging them to seek for whatever food they can obtain. During the first fortnight the chicks do not require any food, but the hen should have a plentiful supply. "After a fortnight the food is gradually changed, introducing barley-meal mixed with middlings and buckwheat, which latter is boiled at first and mixed with the rice. Later on the buckwheat, which should be thin-skinned, may be fed whole, but rice must never be given uncooked. When about six weeks old, boiled wheat is excellent, and by this time it is unnecessary to give the finer foods recommended at first. As soon as they have 'shot the red,' and gone up to roost, they may be fed upon wheat, buckwheat, and barley, varied once a day with boiled wheat dried off with barley-meal. In the early stages the chicks should be fed five or six times a day, the first time as soon as it is daylight, but after they are a month old four times is sufficient, and this number may be still further reduced when they are able to forage for themselves. Feeding is, however, always a matter of judgment, for so much depends upon the season and conditions. No hard-and-fast rule can be laid down. During the chickenhood stage meat in one form or another is essential to rapid development and strong frame. Mutton or mutton greaves are the best, but where rabbits are plentiful, they form an excellent and cheap substitute. They must be boiled and mixed with the soft food."

SOME INTERESTING EXPERIMENTS.

THOSE readers of COUNTRY LIFE who are interested in what Professor Ray Lankester calls the science of "Thremmatology," that is to say, the lore of the breeder, will be interested in the elaborate experiments which Mr. J. L. Bonhote is carrying out in his extensive aviaries at Ditton Hall, Cambridge. Some of the first fruits of his results, obtained by hybridising ducks, were exhibited by him at the meeting of the Zoological Society on the 7th inst. His crosses have been made between four species—mallard, pintail, spotted-bill (*Anas pœcilorhyncha*), and New Zealand—and they have yielded results of very considerable interest.

It is well known that the spotted-bill and New Zealand ducks, like some few other species where the sexes are similarly coloured, have no "eclipse-plumage." Yet the hybrids, however crossed, always develop this peculiar phase of plumage. In the spot-bill-mallard cross the spot-bill plumage is always strongly to the fore, in both sexes and at all ages, but the females especially show a tendency to develop white breasts. The males, in nuptial plumage, resemble the mallard, in eclipse the spot-bill.

Mallard-pintail and mallard-spot-bill crosses—that is, two hybrids representing four species—gave the same results crossed both ways—a light and a dark form. Curiously, the dark forms have proved infertile *inter se*. The females are infertile when crossed with other forms, but with the males this is not so. Their offspring, it is to be noted, split up into light and dark forms, the light forms producing only light or lighter birds than the parents.

The main results seem to show that these hybrids have either a tendency to white colour or to produce a coloration resembling no known species. In some cases, however, a pattern of coloration was produced which strongly resembled that of other species of ducks, which had had no part in the ancestry of the hybrids. This is a very significant fact, and shows how difficult it is to determine the parentage of wild hybrids.

One very striking fact is to be derived from these most carefully-thought-out experiments. Darwin, it will be remembered, showed—and his work has since been verified—that in crossing domesticated varieties of the pigeon, if very widely-dissimilar races were mated, their offspring reverted to the wild blue rock. Mr. Bonhote's crosses, being made with wild birds, have produced forms resembling no known species. They must be regarded, probably, as corresponding to the "mutations" of Dr. Vries.

Mr. Bonhote has produced hybrids, tribrids, and—shall we say?—tetrabrids, giving results of quite exceptional interest, though too complicated to condense intelligibly. But we should like to see the experiment made of crossing the hybrids of, say, mallard and pintail for two or three or more generations. Would these respond to the Mendelian laws? So far Mendel's work has only been tested, we believe, with domesticated varieties of plants and animals.

W. P. PYCRAFT.

THE DUTCH GARDEN.—II.

IN the introduction to his "History of Dutch and Flemish Painting," M. Alfred Michiels shows how the Dutchman's instinct for making an agreeable dwelling and surroundings influences the general aspect of the country, and explains the difference to the eye of a traveller passing from France into Belgium and Holland. The moment you emerge from France, he says:

"Instead of arid plains, where neither tree nor bush is discovered, where all is shaven and levelled, where you experience the same sensation as in an African desert, where cabins are isolated amid tilled fields, without flowers, gardens, turf, or verdure, you often perceive districts strewn with hedges, pollards, scattered clumps of yews, willows in rows, grassy enclosures—the glance rests upon graceful cottages surrounded

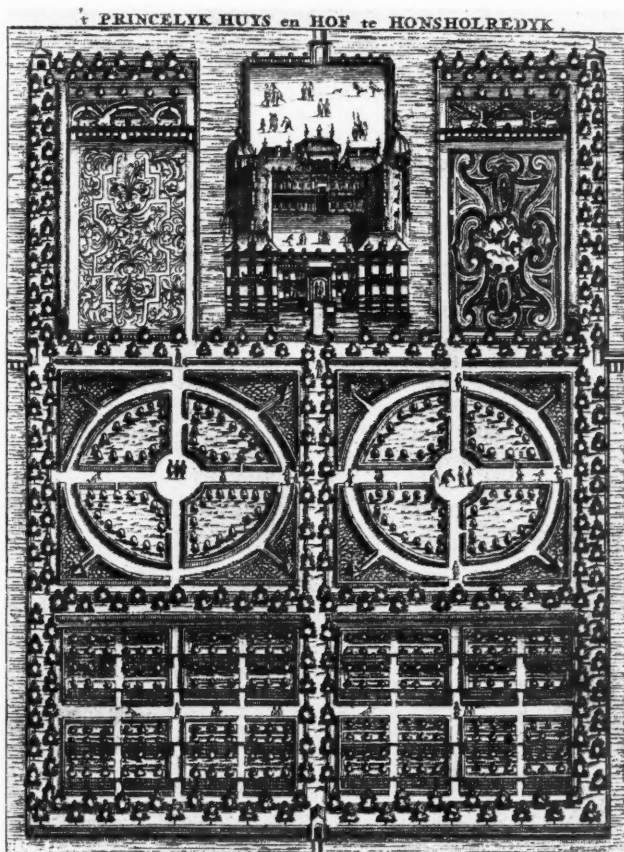


PALACE AND GARDEN OF HONSLARDYK.

Nature encroaches upon the work of man. The country dwellings of the rich flatter the imagination like living eclogues. The wrought-iron grill habitually bears the fanciful names given to these bucolic dwellings: Belle-Vue, Meadow-Peace, Rose-Joy, Flowered Valley, Sweet Leisure, Safe Retreat, are the most common. A small canal surrounds the garden, and serves as boundary; great weeping willows bathe their hair in it, water-cress spreads over its surface, and charming wildfowl steer their course amid the reeds. Arcadia is no longer in the Peloponnesus, but in Belgium, Holland, and Germany."

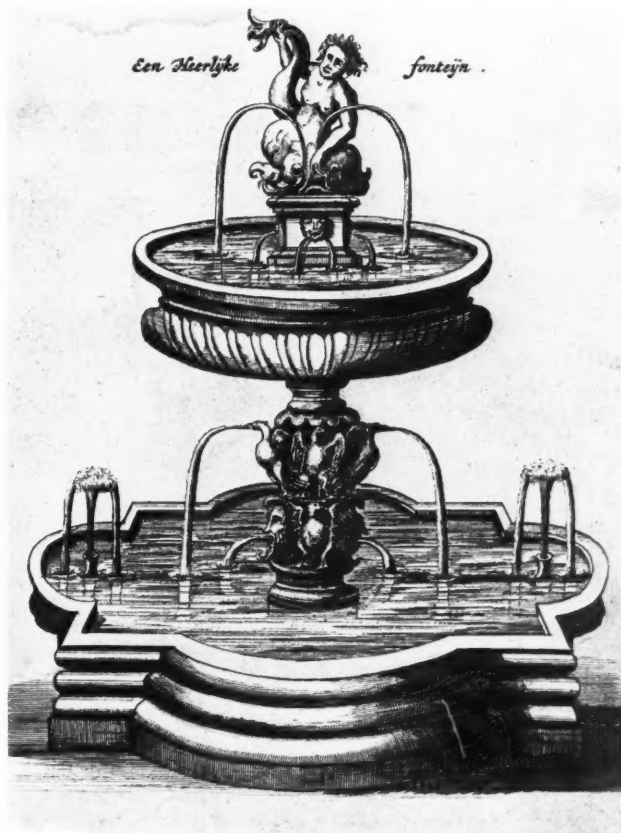
It is typical of the supremacy which France held in garden design in the seventeenth century that the first three out of four cuts in the book by I. van der Groen, the Prince

of Orange's gardener, called the "Dutch Gardener," are of Parterres à la Française—that is to say, "Parterres de Broderie"—and only the fourth is "a vulgar garden—à la mode du Pais Bas"—of a more rectangular pattern, but still with a lozenge or jujube parterre at the foot, arranged like a dish of vegetable sweetmeats. This is divided into four squares, surrounded by box, the first square consisting of flowers, or beds of shrubs; the second of salads and pot-herbs; the third filled with asparagus, cauliflowers, and savoy cabbage; the fourth with



GROUND PLAN OF HONSLARDYK.

by orchards, flower-beds, lawns, perfumed by the lily, the carnation, and the marjoram. Here and there a country house increases the opulence of the picture; you admire its deep avenues, its ancient trunks, its splendid foliage, and its picturesque ponds. Well! cross the frontier, make your way into Holland, the country grows still more pastoral; every city, borough, and hamlet presents the air of a great villa built amid a park surrounded by flowers; the squares, the very streets are covered with magnificent trees, and



A TYPICAL GRAND DUTCH FOUNTAIN.

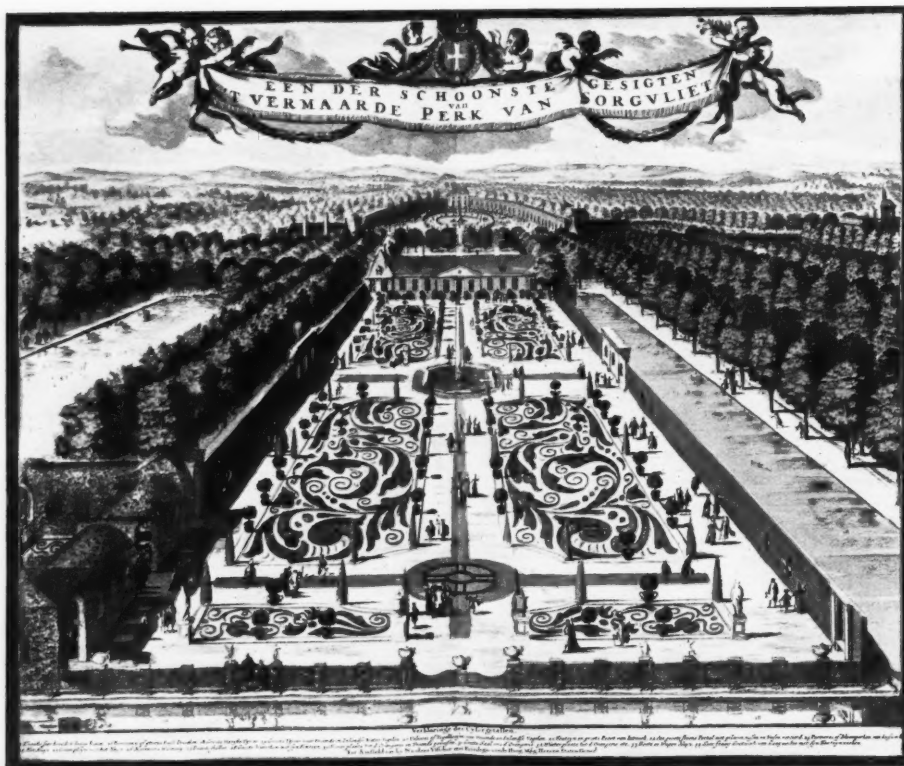
peas, Roman and Turkish beans, carrots, etc. This garden is entirely surrounded with a wooden wall, or paling, against which are planted cherry trees, apricots and peaches interlaced, and all along a border, where strawberries may be grown, while apple, pear, and other large fruit trees stand here and there at intervals, so as not to take from the garden its proper appearance. Quinces and medlars overhang the banks of the canals, and the squares are completed with rose trees and gooseberry bushes. There is also a gardener's hut, on the walls of which a vine may be trained; on one side is a little meadow, or place to dry linen, and on the other an aviary. At the end of his book Van der Groen gives models of fine pavilions, trellised and perforated; pedestals on which to stand flower-pots, pyramids, portals, columns, frontispieces, and hedges with windows that can be covered with verdure and curiously shorn, or painted in white or some other colour; and, finally, models of solar clocks, horologes, or dials, with others which

can be made of box like a parterre.

Van der Groen also shows twenty-four new and curious models of "Parterres à la Française," and 200 more in a separate part of his book; but the only directions for making the compartments of a garden are confined to two pages describing how to divide it up into four rectangular plots, which, again, may be subdivided by straight lines drawn through the centre of the plan to the four corners, and then recrossing them like the foldings of four envelopes. These triangles are then laid out after the more elaborate geometrical patterns.

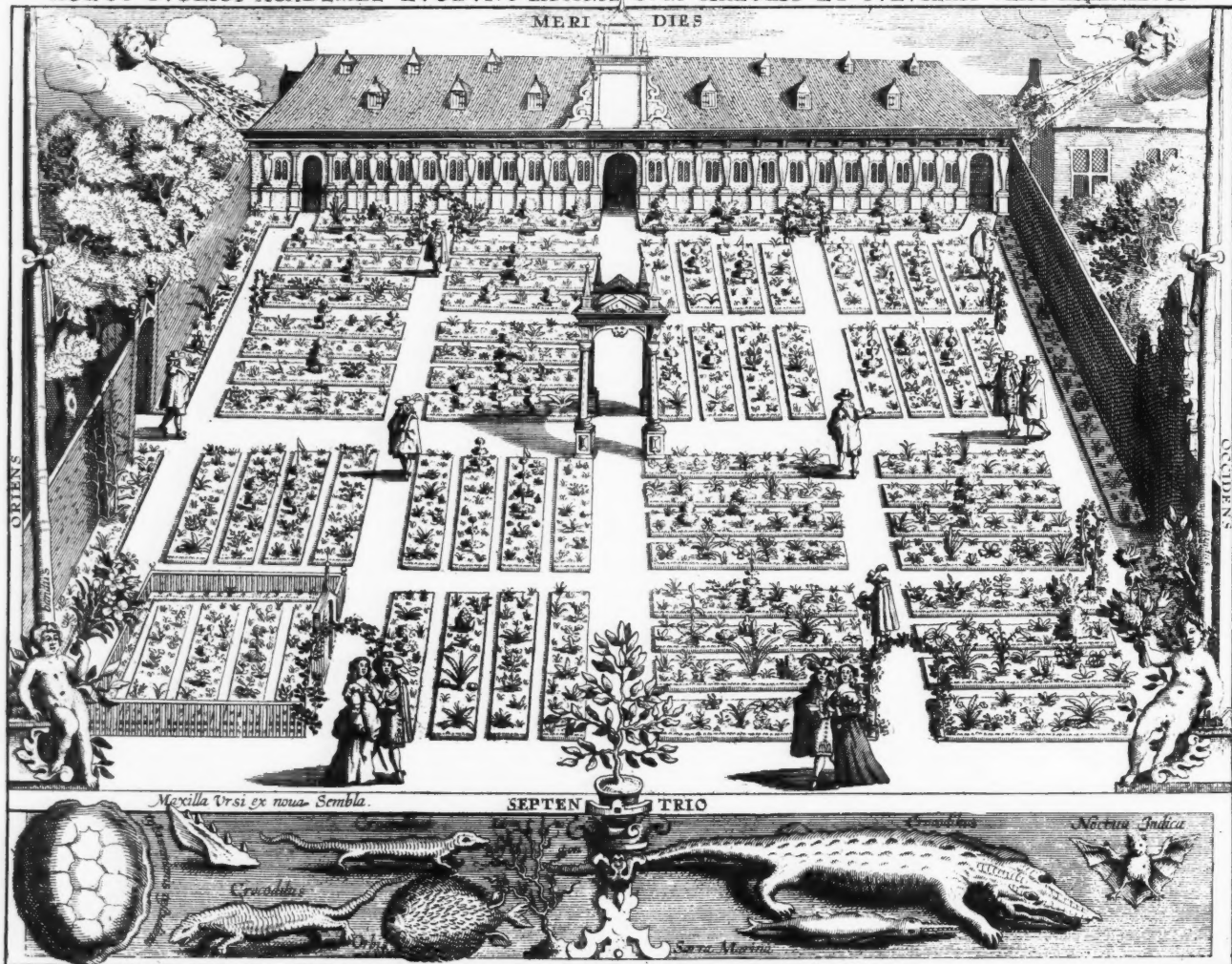
From the French translation by de Groot of the

"Agréments de la Campagne" (1750)—said by Barbier to be the work of a Leyden lawyer, P. de la Cour, who was the first to rear the pineapple in Europe—I take this short summary of the way to arrange a moderate-sized country house and garden. He considers an equilateral triangle is the most favourable figure for the plan, and to deceive the eye, in cases of small properties of three acres or so; but it has the disadvantage of



THE ROYAL GARDEN OF SORGVLIET.

HORTI PVBLICI ACADEMIÆ LVGDVNO-BATAVÆ CVM AREOLIS ET PVLVILLIS VERA DELINEATIO



THE PHYSIC GARDEN AT LEYDEN.

making the alleys finish at a point instead of at right angles. On larger properties he prefers an oblong square, and the ground would be disposed as follows: The approach through a grilled gate over a stone bridge, crossing the moat, four fathoms broad, the side ditches being three fathoms wide; the forecourt would be planted with sixteen limes (polled *à couronne*), and on each side with clipped hedges. At the east of the entrance would be a kitchen garden and a melon frame, surrounded and cut down the centre by two partitions; or a vinery, artificially heated, might be constructed in their place.

On the west is an orangery (beneath which might be placed a grotto or ice-house), situated on a terrace raised 9ft. above the level of the country, with masonry within and without. It has a slope of gin. to each foot, and four levels (*banquettes*) on which to set orange trees in summer; and at the foot of the lowest one a basin filled with water with a spout in the centre. On the first or highest level there are vine-houses towards the south, made on a slope, and 8ft. high. The stable and coach-house are on the side of the terrace, as well as the gardener's house. The owner's house with a view over an embroidered parterre at the back, and a large shield-shaped pond or canal beyond, round which is a clipped beech hedge. The two sides of the parterre and pond are filled in with small fruit trees in the open earth. The alleys running round the whole property are four fathoms broad, formed of great clipped hedges. At the end of the outer alleys of the two sides there is a large statue in the centre, with a small pavilion on either hand so placed as to command the view on three sides. De Groot rightly deprecates the fashionable mania of imitating royal palaces and gardens on a small scale, and sacrificing the simple pleasures of the eye, the recreation of the body, and shade, to expensive terraces, cascades, grottoes, and fountains.

Our William III., as we all know, introduced into England the Dutch taste for gardening, of which Hampton Court was in his reign the most conspicuous specimen of the fusion of the French and Dutch styles. He possessed, as the Prince of Orange, several hereditary palaces besides Loo, including Dieren, an ancient seat of the House of Nassau, five leagues from Loo; Honslardyk, two leagues from the Hague (see illustration); Soest Dike, not far from Utrecht; the Castle of Breda and Ryswick, the auspicious Place of Treaty of Peace, the site of the palace now only represented by an obelisk, erected in 1792 by the Stadtholder, William V. His Majesty's palace and gardens at Loo were situated on the east side of a large sandy heath, or in the Veluwe, as the right bank of the river is called, a considerable part of the Province of Gelderland, one of the seven United Provinces. "In the heath beyond the gardens there are six Viviers, or large fish-ponds, somewhat after the model or resemblance of those in Hyde Park, the one communicating with the other." This alludes to the several ponds thrown into one to form the present Serpentine.

In our illustration of Sorgvliet (*Sans Souci*) the prominent features are the four large *Parterres de Broderie*, the broad and long canals, the green *Berceaux* or covered arbours, with doors and windows on the left, the large stone gateways, ornamented with pillars and vases. On either side, in the centre of the long wall of foliage, with recesses for busts, we see the rounded shrubs in tubs, alternating with the pyramidal yews round the beds of embroidery.

It must be, I think, the Sorgvliet, near the Hague (the subject of one of our illustrations), which at a later date Beckford visited, then the country house of Count Bentinck, "with parterres and bosquets by no means resembling the Gardens of the Hesperides." Beckford, however, reflects that as

the whole of it was in a manner created out of hills of sand, the place might claim some portion of merit. "The walks and alleys have all the stiffness and formality which our ancestors admired, but the intermediate spaces, being dotted with clumps and sprinkled with flowers, are imagined in Holland to be in the English style. An Englishman ought certainly to behold it with partial eyes, since every possible attempt has been made to twist it into the taste of his country."

No account of Dutch gardens can be regarded as satisfactory which omits all mention of the cult of the tulip. No less than forty-six pages of the English translation of Henry van Oosten's "Dutch Gardener" (1703) are devoted to a "Treatise of the Manuring of Tulips, as likewise How to Encrease Them," besides thirty-six pages in the earlier part of the work. As to what tulips are esteemed to be the best, florists are divided, "some preferring the violets striped with white that have their colours as well within as without, neat and well distinguished from one another; others prize the Bissarts, which are duller than the violets, and more inclined to inconstancy," varying in bloom from year to year. Remembering that old Thomas Fuller called a tulip "a well-complexioned stink," we note, on the

other side, that van Oosten considers that "the sight in flowers ought to have the pre-eminence, and that the smell gives them no beauty. Those that are so mightily for the smell may supply themselves with perfumes." He tells us, moreover, that in the year 1637 the Dutch did intend to make a merchandising with tulips, as with pearls and diamonds, but the States forbade it; so the people had to sell privately, and to avoid quarrels the Flemish florists erected a fraternity in the cities, and took the Saint Dorothea as patroness, and the Syndicus to be judge of their differences, and he called in four of the brotherhood. The Dutch meet on a certain day "when the tulips are in their best ornaments, and choose after seeing the Prime Gardens of the Florists, and after dining together elect one *Van de Bende* to be their Judge of Differences."

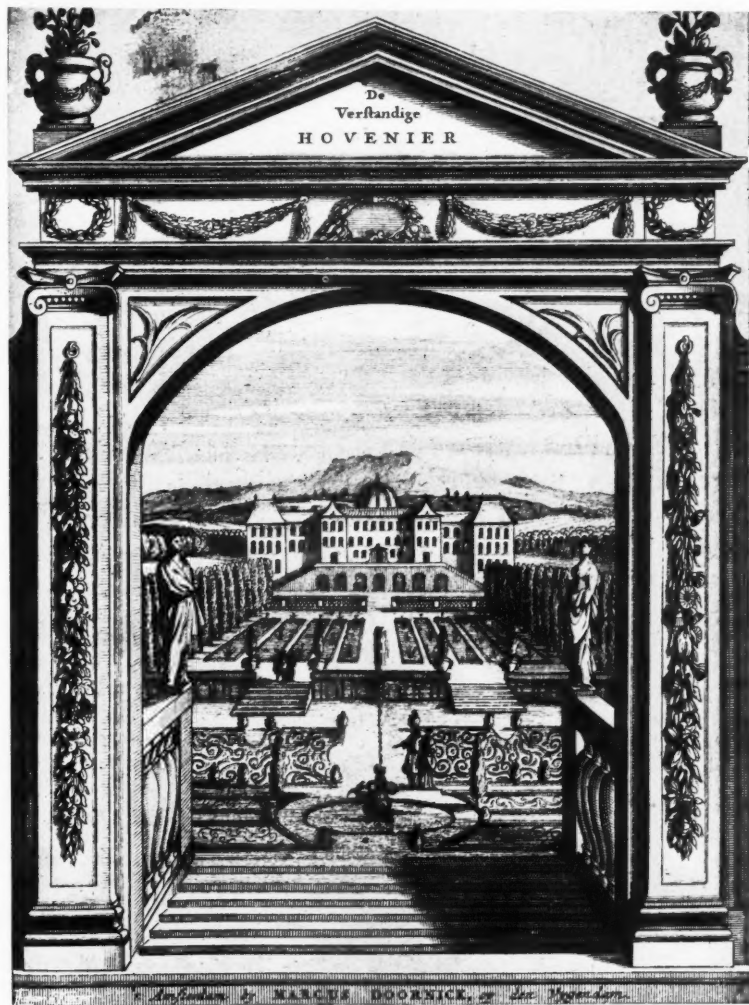
Beckmann, in his "History of Inventions," states on Dutch authority that 400 *perits* (in weight less than a grain) of a bulb of a tulip named *Admiral Leifken* cost 4,400fl.; and 200 of another, called *Semper Augustus*, 2,000fl. It once happened that there were only two roots of the latter to be had, one at Amsterdam, the other at Haarlem; for one of these was offered 4,600fl., a new carriage, two grey horses, and a complete

set of harness, and another person offered twelve acres of land. The real truth of the story is that these tulip roots were never bought or sold, but became the medium of a systematised species of gambling. The bulbs, and their divisions into *perits*, became, like the different stocks in our public funds, the objects of the bulls and bears, and were bought and sold at different prices from day to day, the parties settling up their accounts at fixed periods. Before the tulip season was over, says Beckmann, more roots were sold and purchased, bespoke and promised to be delivered, than in all probability were to be found in the gardens of Holland; and when *Semper Augustus* was not to be had anywhere, no species, perhaps, was oftener purchased and sold. Finally the Government put a stop to it. In 1817 the general price of choice bulbs varied from three to ten guilders (a guilder = 1s. 8d.), and the rarest varieties seldom fetched more than twenty to fifty guilders.

The first tulip in Europe was seen by Gesner at Augsburg in 1559, and in 1611 they were introduced into Provence in France by the incomparable Peiresc; and the earliest planted in England, according to Hakluyt, were brought from Constantinople by Carolus Clusius.

A. FORBES SIEVEKING.

(To be continued.)



TITLE-PAGE OF "DE VERSTANDIGE HOVENIER."

CLOUDS AND THE CAMERA.

IN the study and portrayal of skies and clouds there is a branch of photography which may be practised irrespective of season, its subject being apparently as far removed from the vicissitudes of seedtime and harvest as the mountain summits are from the valleys; and yet, in a similar manner, each is dependent on the other. But for the mountain peaks, the valley would be an arid desert; in the shadow of the cloud is the renewal of life, in its earthward bending the essential rain. Yet is this service performed in no prosaic manner, but with the accompaniment of more beauty than the average man wots of. How little in general do people know of the sky! With what

wanton splendour are its duties performed! The wind which scatters the seeds of the earth and strengthens the bough, the dew of morning and evening, the rain of all seasons, might, one imagines, have been administered by Nature without the attendance of cloud-forms more varied, more radiant than all the flowers of earth; and for no one is the task of recording this wondrous pageant so simple as for the photographer, and perhaps in no branch or application of photography is success so easy of attainment, if only the prevailing conditions—obvious enough, when attention has been drawn thereto—are but understood. To begin with, how few, with thoughts and eyes intent on



A. Horsley Hinton.

A MOORLAND SCENE.

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A. Horsley Hinton.

WHEN THE TIDE IS LOW.

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the daily environment, have ever realised how immeasurably lighter is the sky than the earth, even when filled with a great company of heavy clouds; yet you know that, with your most under-exposed landscape negative, the sky rarely refuses to respond to the developer. Quickly enough the sky on your plate begins to darken, and soon acquires full density, when the landscape view remains inert. From this one may gather that so intense, both visually and chemically, is the light from the sky, that under-exposure is all but impossible; so that, if we are to photograph the sky and its clouds, we shall have to readjust the ideas of exposures which we have gathered from the experience of landscape work.

It is not that the light of any particular part of the heavens is of unequalled brilliance, as, for instance, where the sun breaks through or touches the edges of the clouds; nor is it that the sum total of light from all the aerial dome is of so great a volume, and that nowhere are there shadows comparable for depth with the shadows of terrestrial things. Even where the under-

side of some great storm cloud, low brooding over the distant hills, assumes a deep purple hue, it is not so dark, when carefully measured, as we think it to be; and so we gather that in our negative of the cloudscape we shall have to avoid the brilliant contrasts and sharp transition from light to deepest dark which, maybe, it has cost us some trouble to learn to achieve when photographing the scenes around us.

Perhaps our photographic knowledge is sufficient for us to tell that a weakened developer gives a weaker image, that is, one in which there are no extremes of density and transparency, a negative of more uniform opacity throughout; and such a negative will best give us a true rendering of sky and clouds. There are at least three mental standpoints from which the clouds may be regarded, and it may be that whichever one we adopt will to some extent influence in a measure our manner of procedure. We may desire to collect photographic records of cloud forms and combinations, studying them for their economic or scientific interest. Very soon we shall learn that the clouds,

which, before we closely observed them, seemed to be shaped by the mere caprice of some invisible power, can be readily classified, each particular variety constituting the almost invariable accompaniment of certain atmospheric conditions, and portending a particular change in the weather.

Moderating the heat of the sun, checking the escape of heat from the earth, clouds are essential to the economy of our planet. Volumes of air, charged with invisible vapour, which, on coming into contact with colder currents, is condensed and made visible, these clouds are objects of scientific interest, and as such, their presentments may be collected by the student. But it may be that their mere beauty of form and the subtlety of their gradations may attract one of less serious bent merely for their æsthetic value. Stately columns, towered citadels, mountains of alabaster, there is surely enough of beauty to be worth recording. Fancy fashions from the fleecy mass silver swans which sail the deeps of air, or the beauteous resemblance of a flock at rest.

But perhaps the most attractive aspect of cloud photography will be in its relation to picture-making, and clouds, rightly depicted, may often be the very making of a picture. Mr. George Clausen, A.R.A., has said that the beauty of landscape depends not so much on the configuration of the ground, or on the actual facts of any place, as on the effects of light or atmosphere under which it may be seen. "The finest views may look nothing at all on a bad day, and the most ordinary and commonplace scene may be made beautiful by its lighting. The chief element in a beautiful landscape in Nature is that there should be an extensive view, and the charm which this possesses for us is not so much that we can see so far, and see so many things, as that we can see the effect of light and of clouds upon the earth."

Captain Wilson Barker, who has devoted a good deal of attention to cloud photography, considers that if clouds are to be included in a landscape, the most workmanlike course is to expose two separate plates, one for the clouds and another for the landscape, a course which at once gets over the difficulty of the wide disparity of exposure requisite for each; and as the coincident clouds of the particular occasion on which the landscape is photographed can be of no moment, it follows that the clouds of one day may be used with the landscape of any other, provided that both are illuminated in precisely the same direction. This practice of photographing clouds on a separate plate, however, involves serious risk, for often only the trained eye can say from what point the clouds are lighted, and not everyone can always tell in what direction the sun was with regard to a particular landscape; and so utterly incongruous combinations may come about, which, to the more practised eye, violate the most elementary principles of one source of light, and appear ridiculous. Then, moreover, the wedding of one negative to another, so that in the print the two shall appear as one, will not be an easy task, and it seems probable that Captain Wilson Barker, in recommending the two plates method, was insufficiently aware of how far the use of orthochromatic plates and a light-filter, or coloured screen, neutralises the dissimilarity of the dual exposure already referred to; but if we determine to always obtain the clouds and landscape on the same plate, we at once limit our opportunities to those occasions on which the clouds present are of form and character suited to our ideas, just as much as when photographing a landscape with figures or cattle, it is but rarely that we find figures and flocks awaiting our coming, grouped just as we would have them. A little watching and waiting, however, will usually bring its reward, and then the satisfaction of one exposure and one development will be so great as to make the rare occasion seem worth waiting for. A short exposure and a weak developer have already been mentioned as contributories to success, and now we have to consider how we shall in some way retard the too swift action of the sky whilst on a portion of the same plate the landscape impresses its less actinic image. For this purpose we employ a yellow glass screen, called a light-filter, the yellow being of a certain depth and purity; this is placed either in front or immediately behind the lens, so that all light entering the camera by way of the lens passes through it. Thus the camera is converted into a miniature dark room with a yellow window, but the window is not of so dark a tint as to render the light which enters it wholly innocuous. It only greatly retards the more active light of the sky, which abounds in blue rays, and as ordinary plates are nearly insensitive to yellow light, a plate might be exposed in a camera thus furnished for an impracticably long time ere any impression would be made. So we use an orthochromatic plate sensitive to yellow, and sensitive to the light filtered through the coloured screen, which light thereby has its more active blue rays retarded to a speed more or less uniform with the rest.

The reason why with the ordinary process the sky and the distance are so much more exposed than the rest of the view that in development these are completely blocked up and obliterated before the landscape is finished, is because the light coming therefrom abounds in the more active blue component of

sunlight; but by the interposition of a yellow screen these active rays are held back until the less energetic have impressed the plate, the plate employed being especially prepared so as to be sensitive to them. A practical test will dispel the idea that this process is too troublesome, for certainly it involves far less striving and trying than printing one negative into another so as to have no suspicion of the double nature of the picture.

Yet must the light-filter and orthochromatic plate not be left entirely to take the responsibility. Personal judgment and care still have their share in the work. In how many photographs one sees the distance black and harsh in tone, when the clouds and general lighting of the scene indicate the soft haziness of sunset. A knowledge of and sympathy with the effects of Nature will at least enable the picture-maker to condemn a false result and direct his efforts towards a more successful repetition.

Clouds deserve well of the photographer. Long before the blossoms of earth respond to the kindling sunshine in spring these flowers of the upper firmament await our admiration. Even in the grey and sunless sky there are mystery and subtle gradation, emotion in the ragged rain-cloud hurrying over the sighing tree tops, as the wintry wind hurls it afar. Hardly ever without interest, the sky, with its motley denizens, offers a fascinating and instructive field for the camera. A. HORSLEY HINTON.

IN THE GARDEN.

WINDOW AND ROOM PLANTS FOR THE SPRING AND SUMMER.

MANY plants are available for room and window decoration in the spring and summer. The most useful of all is unquestionably the Parlour Palm, *Aspidistra lurida*, of which variegata is a very charming variety, with leaves blotched and lined with creamy white. It is capable of withstanding draughts, and even seems to thrive where other plants quickly die. Of Ferns, *Pteris cretica* is the most satisfactory in rooms, and of this there are two excellent varieties, namely, *cristata* and *albo-lineata*, which has a broad band of creamy white down the centre of each frond-leaflet. *Cyperus alternifolius* and its variety *variegata* enjoy a moist soil, and have a certain gracefulness which is pleasant to see, but moisture is essential to success. Daffodils, and, in fact, all bulbs, are most useful, the first mentioned in particular, as these seldom fail to flower freely. The window-box is usually given over to *Euonymus*, *Box*, and evergreen shrubs, and this is well enough for winter, but for a spring display there are Daffodils, Crocuses, Wallflowers, Daisies, the exquisite bulbous Irises, of which *I. reticulata* (the Netted Iris) is the most fragrant, and many others. A window-box may be a garden of the greatest interest, but it is usually filled with conventional things which tire one through their constant repetition.

HINTS ABOUT THE LAWN.

When a lawn is made from a good level field, it will be only needful to correct irregularities where they occur. Rough harrow the surface, give a liberal dressing of soil ($\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of bone-dust to the cartload), and well roll it in after rain. First scythe the grass, then use the lawn mower. When the land is heavy it must be thoroughly drained, the pipes being laid 18 in. deep. Sow seed now, and purchase the finest mixtures, which are specially prepared by the leading nurserymen. From the middle of March to the end of April is the best time for this work in the South of England, and three weeks later for the North and Scotland. After the seed has been sown, well rake the surface, and roll it well with a heavy roller. Draw a light roller over the ground when the seed appears, and scythe it when the blades are 4 in. high. Moss indicates a poor soil or absence of proper drainage. Mossy leaves should be well raked over, and then dressed with the following: To every cart-load of good garden soil add $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of bone-meal, the same quantity of quicklime, a barrowful of wood-ashes, and a very little finely-crushed nitrate of soda. Nine cart-loads of this excellent mixture should go to the acre. One half-pound of grass seed to the pole is the correct quantity to sow. Weeds are always troublesome, especially Dandelions, Plantains, and Daisies. We believe in the old way of spudding them out; but "lawn sand" is good, especially for the eradication of Daisies. All patent weed destroyers must, however, be used with extreme caution, otherwise the grass itself suffers. Water the newly-made lawn during the summer when the weather is very hot, and make good defects. Always have the mowing machine in proper condition, otherwise the grass will be torn off, and not neatly cut. A well made and kept lawn is a pleasant feature, but it must receive constant attention.

RANDOM NOTES.

Planting Trees and Shrubs in March.—It is insisted upon in books of any worth that the time to plant trees and shrubs is October; but it is not, of course, always possible to do so. Opportunities are taken during winter when the weather is fine and the soil in the right condition to plant, the season ending when March is over. The later the work is postponed the greater risk there will be of ultimate success. A few things are better for being planted even in April, and this applies especially to Holly, Magnolia, and Tulip Tree.

A New Chinese Primula.—Amongst the recent new flowers given an award of merit by the Royal Horticultural Society was a Chinese Primula called His Majesty. It was shown by the well-known firm of Messrs. Sutton and Sons of Reading, who have raised so many beautiful varieties, especially those with double flowers. In the present case they are quite double, but the petals are not packed tight, the outer ones forming a background, so to say, to the centre. They are large without coarseness, and of the purest white. It marks quite a distinct advance.

Fuchsias as Climbing Plants.—

If anyone wishes for an object-lesson in the growing of Fuchsias as climbers, a visit should be paid to the greenhouse in Kew Gardens, where the roof is draped with foliage and, in the appointed season, an abundance of flowers. We noticed in a contemporary an excellent note describing the culture of the Fuchsia for the greenhouse, and it is as follows: Anyone who knows Kew at all well will remember the climbing Fuchsias in the greenhouse there, running riot across the roof, forming a canopy of hanging blossoms. For this style of growth the young plants should be confined to a single stem, by pinching in all the side shoots, secondary as well as primary, not removing them at first, but leaving a pair of leaves to each, as they will help to thicken the stem and add to the vigour of the plant. When the stem is 5ft. or 6ft. high, and is getting thick and woody, these lower side shoots may be removed, one or two at a time, beginning at the bottom, and the plant either put into a large pot or into the soil, so that it can be trained against a rafter. If kept growing in a gentle heat, and never allowed to get stunted for want of room, or to use its strength in producing flowers, the plant should reach this height some time during the second season. Amongst the many varieties suitable for this purpose may be mentioned the old-fashioned Rose of Castile, Venus de Medici, Royal Standard, General Roberts, and Charming. These will all become climbers fairly rapidly, and there are many others which will answer the purpose, though some will take a longer time. Fuchsia corallina and F. gracilis are two beautiful kinds for this purpose, but, as they are very hardy, it is not often they are grown in a greenhouse.

A Beautiful New Annual Flower.—We notice in the list of Messrs. Sutton and Sons of Reading a new annual flower called Nigella Gertrude Jekyll. We happened to see this beautiful Love in a Mist in Miss Jekyll's garden at Munstead, near Godalming, where it was raised, and no annual flower has such



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THE ROCK ROSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

beautiful flowers, veiled in delicate leaves, is the reward. The variety Miss Jekyll is so great an improvement upon the Love in a Mist we have been accustomed to that the type will probably in time disappear from our gardens.

The Spurred Aquilegias or Columbines.—A display of the long-spurred Columbines at a floral exhibition is always a centre of interest and delight, and the reason is obvious. A well-chosen selection is as dainty as anything in the world of flowers, and the colours are fresh and bright, ranging from pink through shades of apricot, crimson, brownish red, salmon, rose, orange, and yellow. These have been obtained through years of patient selection and hybridisation, but when ordering the seed insist upon having the long-spurred flowers, those without this graceful appendage having a dumpy look, which is not atoned for by even beauty of colouring. The writer always plants the varieties of the long-spurred race, through so many disappointments in the flowers not coming true from seed, and the garden without these flowers for cutting and ornament is to the writer as joyless as a mixed border in which the fragrant Sweet Pea has no place. The hybrids grow vigorously in ordinary soil, but not the Alpine species, which are, for the most part, very delicate and short-lived.

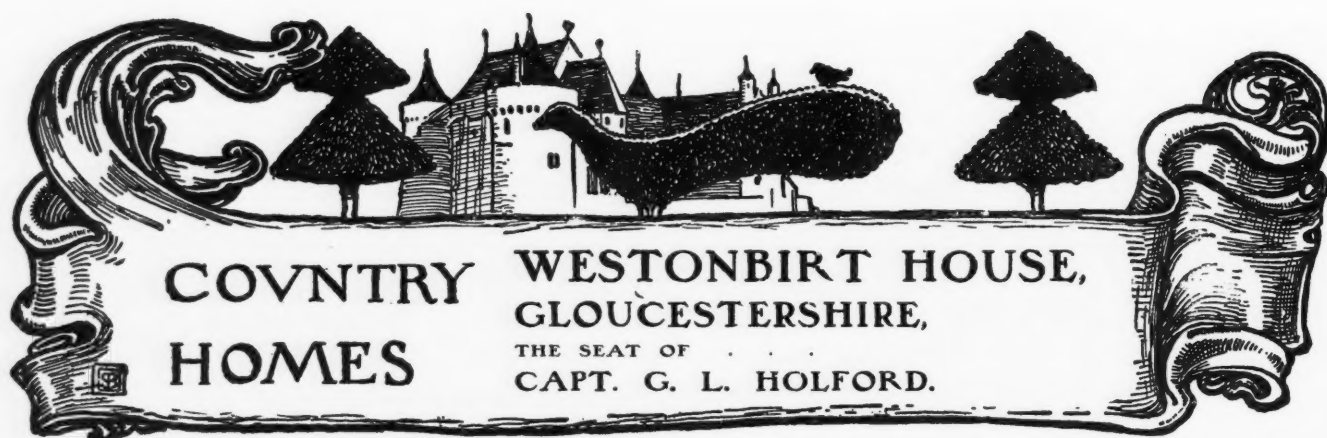


C. Hutcheon.

IN THE HEART OF THE COPSE.

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a deep blue colouring as this, with a boldness of form, too, without any suggestion of coarseness. Messrs. Sutton write: "We have been fortunate in securing from the raiser, whose name it bears, the entire stock of this lovely variety for distribution. The plants are vigorous, attaining a height of 18in., and give an abundance of long-stemmed flowers, which are of a clear Cornflower blue, set in slender foliage. This will prove one of the most attractive annuals." The Nigellas are well-known hardy annuals, and very easily raised from seed, which should be sown thinly in the open garden in March. Thin out the seedlings well, and an abundance of those quaintly-



THE beautiful Jacobean house of Westonbirt—standing high in the pleasant Cotswold country, in the very centre of the Duke of Beaufort's Hunt, where Silk Wood, adjoining the park, is one of the most famous fox coverts in England—is a modern creation, though, from its majestic style and architectural detail, it might well seem to date from the prime of the English Renaissance. The position is about equidistant from Gloucester, Swindon, and Bath, and about four miles from the precipitous scarp from which one looks right across the Severn Valley to the Forest of Dean and the Welsh hills. Here, on the very border of Wiltshire, Hugh le Despenser was installed in possession in the time of Edward III., after whom came the Willingtons, and then the members of a family named Wroth, who inherited through marriage with an heiress, and in the same way the estate passed to the Beaumonts. George Lord Daubeney died seized of the domain early in the reign of Henry VIII., and afterwards it was granted by the Crown in succession to Edward Duke of Somerset, and to one James Basset. Then it came to the family of Crewe, whose heiress married Sir Richard Holford, Knight, descended from the ancient Cheshire family of Holford of Holford, who was appointed a

Master in Chancery in June, 1693. This gentleman's son, Mr. Robert Holford, and his grandson, Mr. Peter Holford, both filled the same important office, the last of whom died in 1803. He was the grandfather of the late Mr. Robert Stayner Holford, who was high sheriff of Gloucestershire in 1843, and represented East Gloucestershire in Parliament from 1854 to 1872.

Mr. Holford was a man of elevated tastes, an intense lover of Nature, and an enthusiastic planter and gardener, who made his estate of Westonbirt one of the most beautiful in that part of England. He was also one of the first of English gentlemen to take up orchid-growing. To magnificence of architecture, and the sumptuous adornment of the splendid house he built, he added the infinite charms of radiant and beautiful pleasure-grounds, including an admirable Italian garden, and veritable triumphs in the landscape style; while his planting of the park, the arboretum, and other parts of the estate, was so successful that it set a pattern to many, and did no little to awake that love for wise planning and planting which has given so many beautiful places for us to admire. The great charm of Westonbirt is in the gorgeous colour effects which are attained, and Captain Holford is no less devoted to his garden and grounds than was





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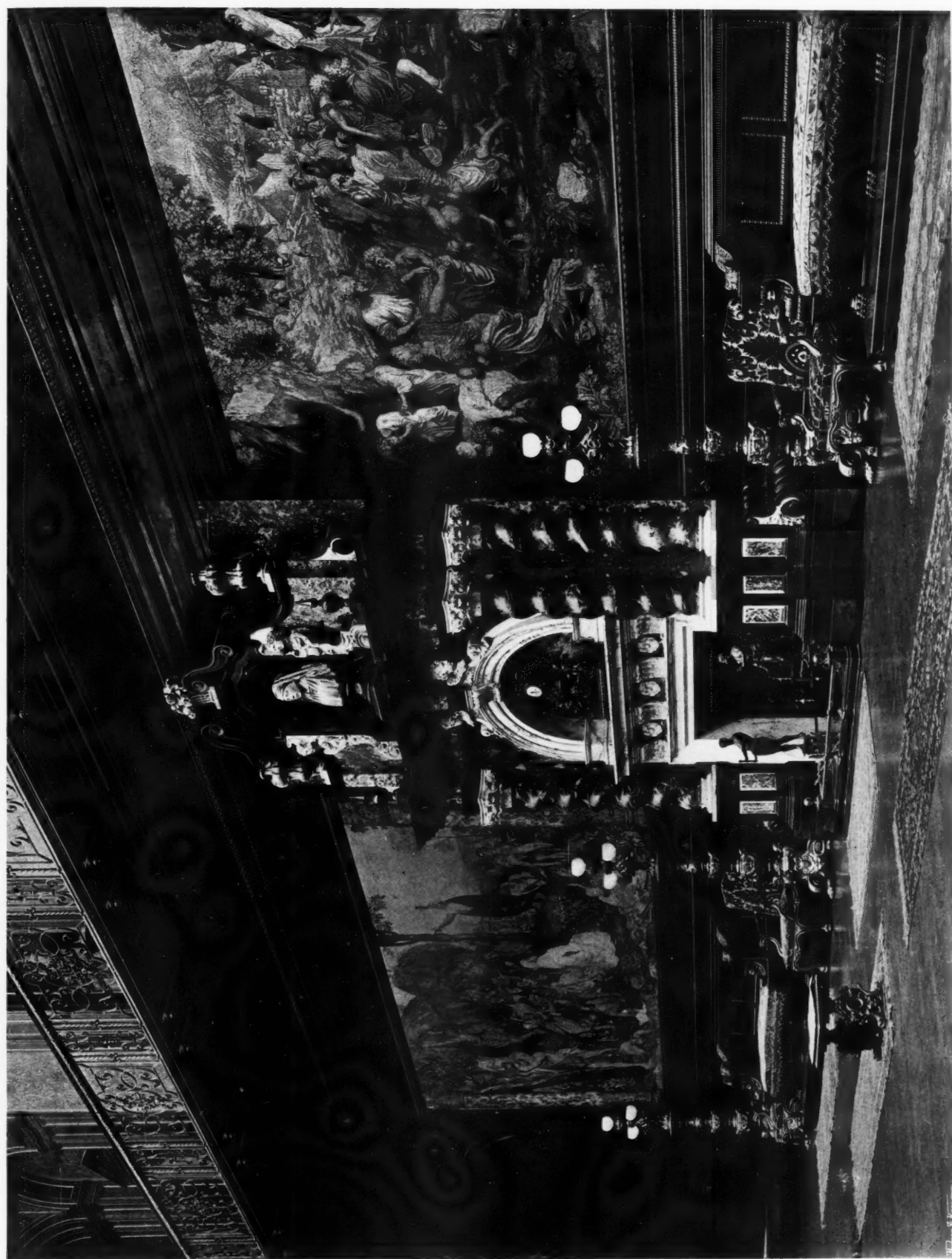
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE NORTH SIDE OF THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE SALOON.

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his father, so that Westonbirt is now one of the most successful and beautiful places in all England. Two other articles shall, however, be devoted to the garden and grounds, which will be fully illustrated.

We are now concerned with the house itself, which, as all may see, is a structure of great architectural merit. The first of its predecessors of which there is any knowledge was an old Cotswold manor house. Many of the class still remain, and their high gables, grey weather-beaten fronts, and panelled stairways and rooms, are the delight of lovers of the picturesque. The house stood not quite on the site of the present mansion, but very near it, and the situation was, as it still is, particularly noteworthy; for, before we go any further, it may be interesting to note that the Cotswolds here throw out a spur from the main range, by way of Rodmarton into the vale of Minety, between Tetbury and Cirencester, forming the watershed between two considerable rivers, turning the Avon to the west and the Bristol Channel, and the Isis, or rather the Thames, to the east and the North Sea. The old manor house, like its present successor, stood high on the plateau of the Cotswolds, in a district where the brashy limestone overlying the oolitic rock is near to the surface; but, though it was in the vicinity of the parting of two great water systems, it enjoyed itself the advantage of but one intermittent stream. It was pulled down in the eighteenth century, and a second house took its place, which remained standing until 1863, when it was removed by the late Mr. Holford to make way for the present imposing structure. The building of the new house went on hand in hand with the improvement of the estate. Crooked ways were made straight, whereby the park took a better form, so that the house might be less intruded upon by the traffic of the high roads; and even the pleasant village of Westonbirt was "moved on" a little, so that the site of the village stocks is still pointed out in the garden, while the houses of the village are a little more apart. The pretty church, wherein are the monuments of the Holfords, stands in a grove in the garden not far from the house.

Mr. Holford's architect was Lewis Vulliamy, a pupil of Smirke, who was successful in the design of several important places, and from whose designs Mr. Holford's splendid classic

house in Park Lane was also built. Vulliamy, who had travelled much abroad as a student of the Royal Academy, had a profound knowledge of classic forms, but he had also imbibed the true spirit of the English Renaissance. Indeed, we may say that his equal acquaintance with the pure and mixed styles did much to give him the ability to conceive bold and pure forms of grouping, and to adorn his structures with much attractive detail. Unfortunately he died in 1871, before Westonbirt was completed, and another hand was employed in the architectural parts of the Italian garden. Vulliamy took his idea for Westonbirt principally from the famous house of Wollaton, Lord Middleton's place near Nottingham, which has also influenced the style of Mentmore, Thoresby, and other great houses. Magnificent as is the character of Wollaton, it has been criticised as presenting somewhat of a stringing together of ornament, without solidity of design; but it will be seen that this defect—if defect there be—has been avoided at Westonbirt. Dignified simplicity is in the bold form of the edifice, and the central and angle towers, with their pilasters and adornments, are admirable in their effect. The wall spaces are sufficiently relieved, the grouping of masses is fine, and the skyline very picturesque.

Colour has been referred to as one of the great charms of Westonbirt, and the house shares in the effect. It is built of the local stone, which has a beautiful warm tone, and when the setting sun shines on the garden front, and lights up all that gorgeous gardenage, the effect is one that cannot escape the memory. Beyond the lake, in the landscape garden, this splendid picture is enhanced in charm by being reflected in the silver mirror of the water. How noble is the grouping of the structure will be seen to advantage in the picture of the east angle on the garden front; but wherever we look there is something to please and charm in the design. It will be noticed that climbing plants are not suffered to clothe the walls of the house—which is judicious—except in certain places, as on the blank wall of the kitchen wing, where are trained several magnificent magnolias.

Now let us notice the nobility of the interior, premising that through a fine ante-hall, adorned with splendid columns and pilasters of rare classic marbles, we reach the grand gallery





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THE BOUDOIR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

hall, to which three pictures are devoted. The proportions are excellent and the adornments superb. Magnificent Gobelins tapestry, from designs by Nicholas Poussin, clothes the walls with rich and harmonious colour. The floor is of polished oak, the ceiling is superb, and the great chimney-piece, of Dutch origin, in glorious marbles, with sculptured panels, twisted pillars, arches, bust, and urns, is a marvel of craftsmanship and skill. The bronze figures standing in the place of "fire-dogs" are remarkably graceful and beautiful, and there is much other rich work in metal in the noble apartment. The furniture is mostly Italian, and includes some very interesting examples. There will be noticed at the end of the hall, standing between the two enriched doorways and fluted Corinthian pilasters, a canopied throne, which has a history. It was the custom of the Italian princes to have in their houses such thrones of honour to be used as the *sedes* of the Pope when he visited them; and this

particular specimen was a present made by the Medici to the Strozzi on the occasion of a double wedding between the sons and daughters of the two houses. We might go on describing the beauties of the interior of Westonbirt, but we shall leave the pictures to tell much of the story. There are spacious drawing-rooms and libraries—for Captain Holford has a fine collection of valuable books—and the French boudoir is charming in its grace and gaiety. The style is a free treatment of the Corinthian, with archings in the walls, a sculptured and enriched cornice, and a delightful painted ceiling taken from a water-colour design by one of the great Spanish artists. The dining-room, studio, and other apartments are not less excellent, and a splendid stairway leads up from the grand corridor to spacious suites of rooms above.

Although Captain Holford's main collection of pictures is contained in the gallery at Dorchester House, Park Lane, many

fine examples of the old masters are also to be seen at Westonbirt. Among the most important are a beautiful "Nativity" by Moretto, two Rembrandts, being portraits of himself and of the wife of Justus Lipsius—both of these pictures are from the Fesch collection; two striking portraits by Sustermans, a beautiful "Adoration of the Shepherds" by Bonifazio Veronese, "Diana and Actæon" by Paolo Veronese, one of the few small landscapes from the brush of Domenichino, "The Assumption," a girl's head, and a "Magdalene" by Murillo; two Claudes, formerly known as the Methuen Claudes, a beautiful portrait by Tintoretto, works by Joseph Vernet, Girardi, and Gaspar Poussin, a magnificent "Holy Family" by the artist known as the Master of the "Death of the Virgin," after the Dutch school; three pictures by Teniers, including the

BIRD-NESTING IN BORNEO.

IF the German has a national penchant for stodgy sausages, the Frenchman for frogs, and the Briton for bully beef, it is only natural to expect that the "heathen Chinese," who is notoriously "peculiar" in many things, should also have his own particular and peculiar penchant for certain dainty dishes. His principal favourites in this line of business consist of sun-dried cuttle-fish (tripang), the fins of sharks, and, over and above all, the treat of edible birds' nests, which to John Chinaman are the real tit-bits beyond all other delicacies. His fondness for all three points to his predilection for gelatinous and cartilaginous ingredients in the bill of fare of his daily food—when he can get them.

It may be briefly mentioned that the fins of sharks are nearly allied to the fins of skates and dog-fish of more Northern climates, whose cartilaginous character is well enough known. The cuttle-fish, again, are nearly allied to the jelly-fish, so familiar to most people. But there are cuttle-fish and cuttle-fish, and they are not all equally palatable to the Chinaman, as they range from the most simple forms to the more specialised varieties, even up to the voracious octopus itself. The first two of these articles of diet are much in evidence in a China bazaar provision shop, while edible birds' nests are so expensive as to be practically caviare to the million, and only procurable by the more prosperous portion of the population.

It was on board ship, on my way for a rambling journey through Borneo, that I made the acquaintance of one of the officials in that remote island, who was in the service of Rajah Brooke, the absolute monarch of all he surveys in that particular territory through which I proposed to travel. After a short stay at Kuching, the village capital of the Rajah's possessions of Sarawak, I found myself paying my promised visit to Mr. D—at his inland quarters, and it was through him that I was able to go a-bird-nesting in the wilds of Borneo. The birds that build edible nests are somewhat widely distributed geographically, but their principal habitat is the Malay Peninsula and the islands that form the Indian Archipelago, of which Borneo is the largest, and is said, moreover, to be, next to Australia, the largest island in the world—though this honour is also claimed by New Guinea, another island of the same group.

The nests are invariably found in the rifts of rocks, or in underground caves, which are frequently of great extent. The caves themselves, like other underground caves, are for the most part formed in rocks of limestone formation. They are not generally, as is usually supposed, accidental rifts in rocks of any geological formation, caused by earthquakes or volcanic disturbances, but are gradually excavated by the slow solution by water of the soluble ingredients of the rocks through the process of generations. Hence the stalactites and stalagmites to be frequently found in these caves, composed of the insoluble substances in the drippings from the rocks, as occurs with icicles during the continuous dripping of water in frosty weather. Hence also the fact that there is generally a stream of water running through most, or at any rate the largest, of these underground caves. This was the case with the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky in the United States, and the Jenolan Caves of New South



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THE ANTE-LIBRARY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

"Triumph of Venus," and the beautiful picture known as "Le Diamant de la Curiosité" by Nicholas Berchem; "The Pedlar," a lovely little picture by Frans Mieris, and some of those exquisitely-painted birds for which Hondcoeter was famous. English artists are represented at Westonbirt by a portrait of the Duke of Hamilton by William Dobson, others by Opie, Allan Ramsay, and Romney, and a three-quarter-length painting of Viscount Castlereagh by Sir Thomas Lawrence, which was presented by Lord Castlereagh to the late Mr. Holford's father. There are two fac-similes of this picture, one in the Waterloo Gallery at Windsor, and the other at Londonderry House. With these brief and inadequate notes on the Westonbirt pictures we must conclude our account of the beauties of the house. There is an even greater charm in its gardens and grounds, which have yet to be described.



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THE NORTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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WESTONBIRT: THE STUDIO CHIMNEY-PIECE

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Wales, which I had previously visited, and such also the case with the unexplored cave which I was visiting just now. The former two of these caves are the largest underground caves in the world, so far as at present known; and though the Mammoth Caves take the cake, so to speak, in mere actual size, yet they are not to be compared with the Jenolan Caves of Australia as regards the beauty of their internal stalactite formations, with their strange curiosities. It is impossible, of course, to know the extent of the Borneo underground caves just mentioned, as we were the first Europeans to enter them, while our means of illumination and other equipment were of the most primitive kind. Moreover, it is not at all unlikely that there may be many underground caves undiscovered larger than any that we yet wot of, for the entrances of such caves are often so small as to bear no adequate relation to the size of the passages and caverns inside, and consequently manage to escape the attention of explorers.

At the time of my visit the bronze little Dyaks, as the aborigines of this part of Borneo are called, were finishing their annual occupation of gathering these birds' nests, the season for which was now nearly over. Off we went, however, with about a dozen Dyaks for guides and general company. The entrance to the cave was so small and so elevated that I had some little difficulty in reaching it, though the scrambling little Dyaks did so with comparative ease. After we had travelled for some little distance we came across the inevitable stream, which is sure, as I said, to exist in some portion or other of these great caves. The ground, which was to a great extent composed of the bed of the stream, was rough and irregular, sometimes in the form of sharp ledges and boulders, and sometimes in the way of pools and hollows, through which we floundered and blundered in the most haphazard way. The stream marked the general trend of our direction, though we frequently left it, only to meet it again, as the Dyaks happened to direct our footsteps. The water in the pools and stream was, of course, quite tepid, as it was sure to be in this locality which is almost exactly under the equator, and is therefore one of the sultriest climates, if not actually the hottest, in the world all the year round. Indeed, everything was particularly sultry and oppressive in this underground journey of ours.

Instead of the electric and lime lights of such civilised caves as those of Mammoth and Jenolan, we were lighted on our way by torches carried by our Dyak guides, consisting of long strips of dried resinous wood kept together in suitable bundles with a movable withe around each of them, that slipped up or down at the pleasure of the torch-bearer. When the torch burnt too brightly, and therefore wasted too quickly, the withe was moved upwards towards the burning ends, and by bringing them together, diminished the light and consumption by diminishing the ventilation. Whereas, when the torch was not burning enough, the bearer moved the withe, the burning ends of the faggots separated, the torch was swung rapidly two or three times, and immediately began to burn briskly and brightly. The

simple Dyaks knew nothing of the reason why, yet they did this like their fathers before them, as if they knew everything about the chemical laws of combustion. And thus, as I said, we floundered and blundered along, very slowly and awkwardly. At last we came across a certain passage that seemed a veritable eye of a needle, so hard it was to enter, for it looked so narrow and confined that I despaired of ever getting through it.

The Dyaks, though neatly formed, are usually, I might say invariably, of small size, seldom exceeding 5ft. 4in. or 5ft. 5in. in height; and their uniformity of size is quite remarkable compared with Europeans. This comparative uniformity of size prevails not only among the Dyaks of Borneo, but among almost the whole of the Indo-Chinese race, including Burmese, Siamese, Cambodians, and the widespread Malays that stretch along the coast of these regions. My companion, Mr. D—, was also not overburdened with the mortality of flesh. The Dyaks therefore got through the passage with ease, and so did Mr. D— without

very much trouble. But when I fairly got squeezed into the breach, so to speak, I could force myself neither upwards nor downwards (for that was the direction of the passage), and there I was, suspended like Mahomed's coffin or a trussed fowl. By dint of wriggling, however, I at last found myself on the top of the passage, minus a certain amount of skin and some buttons from my tight-fitting khaki coat. Still on we jogged for the best part of a mile, when, lo and behold! the caves in which the birds were breeding, and which were to be the limits of our underground wanderings.

A faint glimmer of light could be seen through a rift in the rocks far above us, and it was through this small rift, which was a sealed passage even to the Dyaks themselves, that the birds passed in their journeys to and from their nesting-grounds. Our arrival, of course, disturbed whatever birds were there, and they disappeared as best they could. Nor were there so very many of them, as at the particular time of day we paid our visit most of the birds would be foraging elsewhere. A few rapid swishes of the different torches, with proper adjustment of the wites, and they burnt brightly for a time in our Pluto's Hall, which was an

appropriate enough name for this cave, in the absence of any other. And there, for a time, we watched the Dyaks going through their gymnastics of robbing the birds' nests, with their ropes and long poles, creeping along the high ridges and ledges, in the lurid light of the torches, like unearthly spectres. It was rather late in the season for getting many edible birds' nests, and the Dyaks went with us more as guides than with the hope of making a great haul of nests. We got enough, however, to satisfy our curiosity, and that was all we wanted, besides being enlightened in the way in which the thing was done.

The birds that build these peculiar nests are a species of swallow, not very different in size or in mode of flight from the migratory swallows that frequent our own shores at certain seasons, with the usual skimming flight, pointed wings, and characteristically forked tail. The nests consist of shallow, cup-shaped cavities, truncated at one side, where they are attached



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SENTRIES BY THE LAKE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to the rocks like brackets to a wall, and forming something like a two-thirds segment of a circle. It is not always easy to get at them, as they are sometimes glued to the perpendicular sides of the solid rocks, high overhead, so that the nest-hunters have to scale these cracks with ropes and poles to get at them. In substance they consist of an elastic, semi-transparent mucilaginous material, which is said to be a secretion, or macerated food, from the crops of the birds themselves. As robbing these nests for commercial purposes forms a part of the Dyaks' means of livelihood, and of Rajah Brooke's revenue, the birds have frequently to build twice or even three times during the season before they are able to hatch their offspring, and it is noted that each successive crop of nests deteriorates in the way both of construction and composition. The original, or first nests, built at the beginning of the season, are bright and transparent, with but little admixture of other material than the paternal secretion spoken of, and are consequently known on the market as "white nests." But when they are robbed, the next crop is not nearly so pure in substance, and when a third crop has to be built, the nests are found to be adulterated more and more with down and other impurities. The birds, perhaps, getting tired of building, cease to be so fastidious in their workmanship, and hence the adulterations which mar their purity and decrease their value. To that last category belonged most of those nests which we were able to procure on this occasion, as the season was practically over for the gathering of eggs for the market.

And so we returned from the caves, bearing our trophies with us. Nor was it, indeed, without some little anxiety that

I approached the passage which had already given me such a lot of trouble. Even the approach to it (on our way back) was so shallow from above, that we had to grope along on our hands and knees, which was not so much the case through the rest of the caves. And if I found it so hard to squeeze myself through this passage upwards, how much more so would it be in the reverse process downwards? It may be true that the descent to Hades is easy, yet it is not at all true that it is so easy to descend as to ascend rocks, with due regard to the value of one's neck.

The Dyaks' torches, too, were giving out. What, then, if I could not get through the passage? It was a nice look-out for me, the thought of which still gives me the creeps. However loyal my companion was likely to be, and perhaps also the Dyaks, the torches were sure to go out after a time, like the lights of the Foolish Virgins, and then we should find ourselves in the dark and under the ground too. Ugh, I don't like to think of it!

On hands and knees we crept, till at last we reached the trying ordeal. Downwards I wriggled and strained as best I could. But I could not strain downwards so well as I did upwards, and it was with an immense sense of relief that I finally managed to get released from my temporary prison, and flopped down into the pool at the bottom of the passage. In due time, and with our torchlight supply still unfinished, we all emerged safely from the underground cave, and therewith ended the episode of my bird-nesting in far-away Borneo.

JOHN MACGREGOR.

THE WONDERS OF FROST.

IT is only when frost breaks our water-pipes and commits other devastation on our property that we realise the extent of its magic power over which we have absolutely no control. But when on a frosty morning we see a remarkable picture in flaky whiteness deposited on our window-panes by this same power, it does not strike us as being anything but commonplace, and something to be expected during a sharp spell of frost. But have you ever looked into one of these frost pictures and examined it in all its minute detail? If so, then you will have noticed how beautiful is the work of Jack Frost, for no two of the fernlike



FROST-FEATHERS.



"THE GROWING WONDER TAKES A THOUSAND SHAPES."

devices which appear on our windows are alike, and, although many attempts have been made, no one has succeeded in proving that on a single occasion Jack Frost reproduces the same picture twice.

A frost picture is, of course, made up of myriads of minute crystals, and it has been calculated that in a single inch of this fairy work there are no fewer than 10,000 particles. The minute drops of water upon the window draw together in freezing, and so produce a picture of wonderful beauty, but there is nothing to show why they should take the devices of ferns and other verdure, except that there is some mysterious



THE ICE KING'S PLUMES.

power at work which causes the frost to adapt itself to the life of Nature as seen in the fields; but what this power is remains for some scientist of the future to prove.

The frost pictures produced on a window vary according to the degrees of frost registered. If the weather is very keen, the pattern will be coarse; but a curious point is that the action of wind upon the dew which is freezing upon the glass makes no difference at all to the pattern. On the other hand, if only a few degrees of frost are registered, the pattern traced will be infinitely finer, and in the generality of cases more beautiful.

Yet another curious point may be noticed if the several panes of glass in a window are studied one by one. The pattern on each of them is totally different; on one the picture may be made up of minute frost-ferns interwoven with each other in a manner which would defy human skill to imitate, while on the adjoining pane the ferns may be larger, and show no inclination whatever to take upon themselves any definite pattern. Moreover, it will be found that one pattern will be duplicated all over a pane of glass, and on the next pane a different pattern will be duplicated in the same manner. And yet the two pictures side by side bear not the slightest similarity to each other.

The study of frost is as yet in its infancy, and the great

savants who have made wonderful discoveries in chemistry and other branches of science have never turned their attention to frost and its wonderful work. Here is an example of familiarity breeding contempt, for these frost pictures are so common during the winter months that few people see anything extraordinary in them.

There is one man, however, who has devoted many years to the study of frost in all its forms, and that is Mr. James Leadbeater of Rotherham, by whom these photographs were taken. Every winter this gentleman patiently waits for the frost, and then in the special room he has fitted up for the purpose photographs it in all its beauty, and never once has he



LACE PATTERN.

obtained two pictures in the least alike. His method is to place a blackboard about 2ft. outside the window, and then from the

interior of the room he takes his photograph, allowing an exposure of a couple of seconds, and the wonderful results he has obtained are here depicted. There is no elaborate apparatus required, simply patience and a little care, and any amateur photographer can secure equally beautiful pictures if he follows the directions given, and surely Nature was never photographed in a more beautiful form. A further interest attaches to these specimens of the Ice King's work, from the fact that they might readily



WAVING GRASS.



GRACEFUL FRONDS.

serve as models for many of the most effective designs for wall-papers, artistic embroideries, and other decorative work of the greatest beauty. W. NEWMAN FLOWER.

THE QUESTION OF SHEEP UPON GROUSE MOORS.

WHEN you want deer, you must clear off the sheep, or you cannot keep the former upon your ground, no matter how sweet the feeding, and how new the "forest." Indeed, a forest implies merely the absence of sheep, not the presence of trees. There is a great tendency to treat grouse ground in the same way, and, perhaps, this is wise policy. At any rate, the Yorkshire grouse-shooters act as if it were, and clear the sheep wherever they can. But although this may be wisdom in a district where everyone does the same, and where there are no deer forests, it is not so certain that it is the best policy everywhere.

This is not a simple question, for it has many phases, according to the district and the intentions of the owner and shooting tenant, and these two are by no means always actuated by the same causes. We have to consider, first, sheep farms; second, sheep runs; third, sheep cleared; fourth, sheep in their effect upon grouse ground and grouse stock; fifth, sheep as prevention of deer; sixth, sheep as a deer fence; and last, but by no means least, seventh, sheep as a protection against other sheep.

The best grouse year during the last four decades was that of 1872. In saying this, of course, it is necessary to allow that more grouse have been killed in the day in Scotland, as in England, since that time, and in the former more have been obtained in the season on some moors; but these facts reprove only what was known before—that the grouse of Scottish Highlands could not be killed in, and before, 1872, even when they were there. They were too wild for anything but driving, and

this method was not then more than experimentally employed in the Highlands.

It was no unusual thing in those days for "no limit" to be set to yearly tenancies, proving that the lairds knew that the grouse were too wild for the good stock to be injured by any kind of shooting. Much more than half of the August stock was often left for this reason; so that, although driving has enabled the shooter to kill more Highland grouse when they have been there, it does not follow that the method has improved the stock. It has done so in some places, but, at the same time, as a general good grouse year, 1872 was clearly ahead of any later season in Scotland.

A season must not be judged by the fluctuations of individual moors, or even districts, and the whole grouse area of Britain reached high-water mark in 1872; and it is noteworthy that this was before the idea that sheep were inimical to grouse preservation had gained any number of supporters. It might fairly be argued that a system good enough to produce more than 32,000 grouse on the two adjoining moors of Wemmergill and High Force in that year is good enough to continue, or, at least, until better can be done anywhere without the sheep. Some heavily-stocked sheep ground—notably that of Askrigg—produces as many grouse now as the cleared ground, and, this being the case, it is not easy to prove a case for losing the sheep rents, at least, not until better stocks of grouse are shown to be possible without the wool.

The best preservers in Yorkshire prefer to be without sheep on their moors, and many people think that every £50 foregone in sheep rents results in increased value of three or four times that amount for the grouse-shooting. But this view is not general by any means. Probably for this reason—that in most districts the head of grouse per acre has never touched a point, and could not quickly be made to reach a stock, that would let for enough to supersede both sheep and grouse rents.

The worst of sheep is the everlasting disturbance of the grouse. The latter get to know the shepherd and his dog, and take far less notice of him than they would of a stranger; but sheepdogs have got noses, and can grab sitting hens, catch chicks, and eat or point out eggs to shepherds. Then when it comes to dipping the sheep, or shearing them, there is a wholesale disturbance, and the driving about is now done in troops instead of single files. In the latter formation moorland sheep will never tread upon grouse nests, and rarely flush the young brood; but when they are herded together, and come in a solid phalanx, they no longer keep to the "sheep tracks" through the heather, but blunder over everything. Then eggs are smashed and grouse are flushed and cheepers fly down hill in many directions before they are strong enough to fly up or get together again. In this scattered state they are sure to die, even if the weather is warm.

But besides the direct damage, there is the tendency that sheep have to destroy the heather and convert the moor into poor grass. The burning of moorlands is very necessary, but where sheep are they will be very hard upon the tender shoots as they come through the charred ground, and maybe it will take much



MEDIÆVAL ILLUMINATION.

longer to restore the heather, even if the solid bed of it ever does come again. Burning, and sheep to follow, are very destructive to the plant. Where they are very thick the biting of the sheep gives the heather a stunted form, like dwarf Japanese trees or

clipped fences, all compact and bushy on the top, and with ever-thickening stems. This is all good for young grouse to feed upon, for they can scramble along the tops of the heather, provided that they can get there. But when old heather is only partly fed by a small stock of sheep it grows loose and rank, and not even sheep will enter into it, because of the difficulty of getting about. It buries young grouse, and with instinctive knowledge of this the old ones will not nest in it.

In some cases the game tenants have the grazing, and when the farms are sheep-fenced there is far less necessity for the shepherd's constant presence. Sheep farms occur also where there is no fencing, and then they are in some ways a nuisance and in others rather a help. When several people have a common right of grazing, each paying the landlord a certain sum per head, it is not the sort of arrangement one would select for choice; but even under this plan good stocks of grouse have been shown to be possible. The unfenced sheep farm, on the contrary, has some advantages. The sheep do not stray very much, but the shepherd has to see that they do not; and it is wonderful to note that his sheep only require to hear his whistle to know that they must get to their own ground in double quick time. If there were no sheep there would be no shepherd to whistle every morning, and the stranger's sheep would come in with impunity, and the strange shepherd might think well to leave them where they found the grazing good. In an unfenced sheep country one does not get rid of sheep by foregoing the rents for them, and instead of your own servant being upon the beat, other people's men are there with their dogs.

In a deer country the clearing of the sheep is sure to be followed by the red deer taking possession. If both the sheep and forest ground are occupied by one man it is often a misfortune that the deer should leave the higher ground in the summer, because the low ground should be a winter reserve of food for them. They certainly will not go to the high ground when they have eaten up the low country. Sheep upon this low moor would have been very useful, because they would have served two purposes, that of preventing the deer from straying across, or feeding on, the low ground during the summer and stalking season. In this way sheep are better than a deer fence, because they do not keep deer in when they ought to come out of the forest. Hungry deer will go anywhere, as also will the breeding stags after the stalking season, and the sheep and shepherd will not then restrain them, although in the stalking season, and before, they are nearly as effective as any deer fence. It cannot be said that fenced sheep farms are as effective in keeping deer back, because the sheep fence is not much of a hindrance to the more active animals, and also because, where sheep cannot stray, shepherds' visits are not of constant recurrence.

Broadly speaking, the Yorkshiremen have found the right policy, but it cannot be transplanted all of a sudden without financial loss. The Highlands have not grouse enough to make good the loss of sheep rents; and individual efforts there to increase grouse stock are more or less controlled by the general level of stock, so that a new policy needs concerted action as well as time to mature.

ARGUS OLIVE.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

ALTHOUGH the presses at the present time are running over with books, it may not be uninteresting to turn from the stream of novelty, and pay a little attention to the experiment with regard to older literature now being made by the firm of Methuen. Under the competent editorship of Mr. Sidney Lee, they are issuing a number of reprints, of which several are before us as we write. It need scarcely be said the selection, being Mr. Lee's, is admirable. We have a first volume of the *Works of William Shakespeare*, well printed, and prefaced by a brief, and yet not inadequate, biography. It may be taken as certain, after all the research that has been expended during recent years, that the absolute facts known in regard to Shakespeare's life can be put into about two pages of print; and even in that some little recourse to speculation must take place in order to bring cogency into the narrative. For instance, the statement that young Shakespeare was "fired by literary ambitions and especially fascinated by the drama" is more or less guess-work. The bare fact is that Shakespeare left Stratford-on-Avon. At this time of day we cannot do more than speculate on his motives. They might spring either from the restlessness natural to genius or be the outcome of domestic discomfort. He returned to Stratford in his fifty-second year; but only the most meagre tales are known with certainty as to the life he led during the interval. That he drained the cup to the full is evident. No man could have sounded the depths of human woe expressed in "Macbeth" or "Hamlet," no man could have written the line, "Life's but a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing," unless his own soul had come into grim conflict with the tragic elements of life. No man could have written such gay and joyous carols as "Hark! Hark! the Lark," or "Come unto these Yellow Sands," unless he had tasted the very ecstasy of happiness. But in what particular manner he suffered, or was glad, lies wrapped in mystery, and will so remain. Mr. Lee has shown his good sense in refraining from any imaginative interpretation, and confining himself to a bald statement of what he knows. We do not quite understand on what principle he has arranged the drama, since the first volume begins with "The Tempest," which is usually considered to mark the end of the great playwright's career. In the famous epilogue he pathetically declares, "Now I want Spirits to enforce, art to enchant." In his brief account of the play Mr. Lee dwells on its inexhaustible "play of fancy" and rare profundity of thought, but he does not allude to the sadness, amounting almost to despair, with which this chapter of Shakespeare's life is rounded off. The second play is "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," and the third is "The Merry Wives of Windsor," another late play. The fourth is "Measure for Measure," and the fifth "The Comedy of Errors," properly enough described as a boisterous farce which was written in Shakespeare's early days. No doubt the editor's idea in bringing these five plays together was to offer to the public a volume so diversified in interest, as to attract even the few who had not previously made acquaintance with the greatest of our poets.

The second volume that we take up is a cheap edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a work that most of us became acquainted with in childhood. It would be a curious question to ask, whether those who came to John Bunyan in riper years would

feel the fascination and delight that he exercised over them at the dawning of their existence? We have floated so far away from the simple sincerity of Bunyan's time, that much which was taken for granted of old has now become matter of debate and doubt. Yet, whatever we may think of the substance, the English presents us with the most delightful type of narrative prose. What could be simpler and at the same time more sinewy than the beginning of this immortal parable:

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place, where was a den; and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

Such prose is difficult to analyse in a way that will show its beauty, but one simple observation that can be made on it is that the writer is most frugal in his use of epithets. There are, as a matter of fact, only three adjectives in the passage, and they are the reverse of being accentuated or emphatic: "I lighted on a certain place." "A great burden upon his back." "He brake out with a lamentable cry." Bunyan, without much learning, but endowed with a perfect literary instinct, here attains precisely what cultivated writers like Stevenson and his school played the "sedulous ape" to arrive at. No better example of prose in its simplicity could be quoted from the annals of English literature. As a study in style it may be advantageously compared with a book excellently written in an opposite way. Let us take a passage of equal length from "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." We select the opening paragraph, so as not to be tempted into taking a passage that would emphasise the peculiarities of Gibbon's style:

"In the second century of the Christian Æra, the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilised portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle, but powerful, influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence."

The passage is about the same length as that we have quoted from Bunyan; and it is a piece of excellent writing, though it does not possess as much grip as the other. We see that the cultivated writer indulges himself in a very free use of adjectives. We have in the first sentence "the second century," "the fairest part," "the most civilised portion"; in the second, "that extensive monarchy," "ancient renown," "disciplined valour"; and in the third, "the gentle, but powerful influence." No competent judge would deny to Gibbon the merit of being a master of the English tongue; and yet he and the school to which he belongs—that which produced Dr. Johnson and Macaulay, Sir Thomas Browne and Charles Lamb—lose something of their real force by too much display of energy. An old writer has said that every adjective employed has the effect of weakening sense and interest; and, though the statement may be a little exaggerated, it is one to be highly commended to the young writer, who will find the

great masters of narrative to be the most parsimonious in the employment of adjectives. Fielding, Swift, Sterne, radically differing though they do in the most important points, nevertheless agreed in this, that they loved to proceed by the way of plain and simple statement.

To the examples we have quoted let us add another, and it, too, shall be taken from the opening of a book, the writer selected in this case being Jane Austen, whose "Sense and Sensibility" is the first novel in the series edited by Mr. Sidney Lee. It may be said in passing that in this matter we do not endorse his selection, as "Pride and Prejudice" not only comes first in order of time in the works of this authoress, but has a completion, a finish, and a harmony to which she was never again to attain. However, let us quote the beginning of "Sense and Sensibility":

"The family of Dashwood had been long settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre

of their property, where for many generations they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance. The late owner of this estate was a single man, who lived to a very advanced age, and who for many years of his life had a constant companion and housekeeper in his sister. But her death, which happened ten years before his own, produced a great alteration in his home; for to supply her loss he invited and received into his house the family of his nephew, Mr. Henry Dashwood, the legal inheritor of the Norland estate, and the person to whom he intended to bequeath it."

Here we have a style somewhat between the simplicity of Bunyan and the ornate beauty of Gibbon, but it has the distinguished merit of being natural. We can imagine Jane Austen talking exactly as she writes here, and, indeed, it is easy to figure her recumbent on the couch to which she was so long condemned, raising her pretty head, and, with many a light and suitable gesture, telling the story in brief, which is here set out at length.

WOODS AND SUNLIGHT.



M. C. Cottam.

AT THE EDGE OF THE WOOD.

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THE winds of March, the mother of months in meadow and plain, always seem to bring with them a decided call to the woodland, where the up-springing fronds begin already to speak of the renewal of the year's life, even as the croaking of frogs in the forest pool tells that the impulse to love and courtship is stirring the pulses of the batrachian tribe. On the woodland floor little peeping things are already thrusting their tender blades upwards. The trees, it is true, have not begun to burgeon, but that is all the better for the small children of the earth, since it permits the sunlight, which was curtailed off from them in the dark, hot days of summer, to come down in shafts and arrows of light, thus revivifying the tiny plants, that like scared animals had retreated to the depths of earth in the gloomy days of winter. Already the hardiest of the spring flowers are showing their fair faces, particularly the violet and the primrose; but the beds of bluebell, that in the course of a few weeks will extend their colour like a great carpet over the woodland floor, are now showing only the first spikelets. So the wind-flower, too, is but gathering its forces for the time of blooming. The thicket, to all intents and purposes, is still dead; the rank ferns, withered and lifeless, stand as they were when killed by the winter frost. Green shafts of the briar rose protrude amid

leafless, dead-looking tendrils. Where last year the bramble bloomed so lavishly, there is but a prickly, dead-looking mass, through which a stunted beech tree thrusts an arm clothed with dead and withering leaves, that will stay there till the new green buds push them aside. But there is one plant of the thicket and the grove that already is hanging its wavy bowers in long tendrils of green over the bushes and small trees. This is the hardy honeysuckle, that is one of the first to feel the call of spring's awakening. Very welcome it is, for there are few natural pleasures so vivid and intense as that which one feels on seeing the first indubitable sign of spring, be it only a bit of coltsfoot opening its yellow flower on the ploughland, a too early daisy showing its silver head and golden eye long before the dangers of a late snowstorm are over, or a mere sprig of green, the first leaf in a sunny corner, wooed into opening by the soft west wind, smiled upon by the sun as though it were some darling of heaven. And sitting in the woods it is easy to feel the on-coming of life. The sunlight, that has not as yet attained its full strength, comes down in slanting rays, making a figure-work carpet of shadows on ground still reddened by the dead leaves of the beeches. And if you are placed on a little eminence, it is curious to notice that the wind, which when the leaves are all out

is marshalled into one wave of sound, is now broken into a dozen different voices. It whispers round the hollow of the hill, it blows through the tops of the trees, it rustles the dead leaves on the bushes, and seems to talk to itself as it blows between the tree stems. From many places it can be heard at once, and one wonders if it could really be the wind that taught their songs to the various birds. It certainly is true that every song results only from the modulation of wind, and that of some birds, like the wren and the hedge-sparrow, for example, might have been imitated direct from a breeze whistling through a thicket, while one can easily imagine that from their simple carol the more intricate tunes have been developed. So far naturalists have not given any very satisfactory reason why the small birds should be so tuneful and those that are larger unmelodious. But,



M. C. Cottam.

FOREST AISLES.

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nevertheless, there can be no doubt as to the fact. In the wood whereof we write the little wren and the robin sing continuously, while at the edge of it, where there is a little hawthorn hedge, the thin piping of the hedge-sparrow is heard at intervals; the great blue titmouse sings incessantly from the high trees, and ere long the nightingale will come with his rich and endless song. But how raucous are their elder brethren of the wood! The jay is more silent now than he is in autumn, because he does not conduct his courtship noisily; but his voice is forbidding, even as his flight is ugly and uncouth. The jackdaw has his one monotonous and untuneful cry, while the rook in his tenderest moment can only be said to gurgle the words that he cannot utter. A bird that comes to the wood later on is the wild duck, which nests high up in the crowns of the

pollards, but its cry can by no stretch of the imagination be called musical. If we take the birds that come, as far as size goes, midway between the members of the crow tribe and the little songsters, we seem to get the tunefulness only half-developed. Now is the time of year when the yaffle assumes his most brilliant plumage, and his wild cry may often be heard from some high over-topping branch. But no two persons seem to agree as to whether it is pleasant or the reverse. One likens it to a joyous, laughing welcome to the spring, another finds in it only a resemblance to the mad ejaculations of some wild Bedlamite. Most of these sounds, however, vary according to the mood in which they are heard. At one moment the same bird may by the same person be thought to utter only the cry of a maniac, and at another to express the delightful music of spring. To take another

class of bird, it may be questioned whether the cry of the owl be pleasant or not. That of the barn-owl is simply hideous, and it was with no wrong instinct that the common people named it the scritch or screech owl. We confess, however, to a different feeling for the cry of the wood or tawny owl. Perhaps it may be owing to the circumstances under which it is heard, but the "tu-whoo" of this bird, sounding as it usually does over masses of silent woodland, always appears to us one of the weirdest and most impressive voices of the night. Some people think that the wood-owl only cries at certain periods of the year, but this is probably true only of places where they are in small numbers. If they are numerous, they make themselves heard from year's end to year's end. At certain seasons, of course, they call to their young, which reply with a plaintive and immature squawk; but at other times they would appear to shout as they pounce on their prey. The present writer remembers a house in which he used to live as a boy, and often on winter nights he has followed the flight of the owl by its calling, and he came to the conclusion that the bird had a beat as regular as any policeman's. It was often seen coming on its soft, quiet wing round the edge of the house and pausing over the dog-kennel, to which mice were attracted by the remains of biscuit and other food. Then it flew off to where a wide-branched elm overhung a still pool, and as it often gave a cry there, it possibly succeeded in carrying off one of the water-voles that in the darkness had crept out to seek what it could find to eat in the grass. From this pond a row of gaunt and ragged hawthorns stretched away for a quarter of a mile, circling a meadow, and on the other side having a narrow paddock between it and the woodland. This paddock appeared to be the favourite hunting-ground of the owl, and no doubt many tiny woodlanders, in the shape of mice and rats, ventured out into it after nightfall, for the owl would often give a shriek here that in spite of its melancholy seemed to have a note of triumph in it, and then wing its way around the meadow, returning after a long circuit to the corner of the house where it was first seen. Birds beyond all question have mapped out their territories as plainly as man does in

a book of geography, and they attack invaders of their own kind, and expect to be assailed when they cross the boundary. But this has taken us a long way from the connection between the wind and the song of the woodland birds. Perhaps the hypothesis could best be established at the seaside, for the creaking noise made by wild geese and other aquatic fowl bears a very distinct resemblance to the curious noises made by wind and breaker as one blows against the cliffs and the other dashes over the sunken rock. At all events, in the woodland one's mind naturally takes to this form of meditation.

Our photographs, which have been taken with exceptional skill and artistic feeling, show the forest at a somewhat later period of the year than that to which we have been referring, for we see the outskirts already carpeted with flowers, and signs are



M. C. Cottam.

MORNING IN A PINE WOOD.

Copyright

manifest that the spring has arrived. No doubt it was the best time for taking such pictures, because the thick foliage has not yet come upon the trees. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that one period of the year has a monopoly of beauty in forest scenes. No doubt the trees are exquisitely fair when in their first dewy freshness they hang out their beautiful young blossoms to the sweet airs of spring. And, again, when the tints of spring yield to the solid green of summer, there is a majesty about the great trees hanging in mid-air. Summer passes away, and autumn follows with a palette that

scatters the brightest colours over leaf and spray. Yet these are but symbols and emblems of decay. Soon the wild winds will arise, bringing down the leaves in dancing armies to the ground, along which they are blown till they look like millions of tiny running hounds, and one would think that desolation has laid its bleak finger on the forest. Not so! The bare outline of the trees has a beauty of form that is never truly discovered till the time of snow and frost. And when the sinking winter sun, falling on the horizon like some molten blaze of light, casts his red beams between the boles of the trees, it would be difficult to imagine



E. Max-Mills.

THE ELDERS OF THE FOREST.

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anything more exquisite. Yet the effect is preserved and something added to it when in early spring days the sun's gentle but increasing radiance draws out the first buds, that lend a certain softness to what before was too stern and hard, and the wind which breathes returning health entices plant and leaf to show themselves once more. The air, too, is full of promise, and the singing of birds joined to the renewal of vegetation make one feel that life must soon arrive at the flood once more. For, like everything else in Nature, it ebbs and flows as the tides do, disappears and comes again, causes the

new generation to take the place of the old in the leaves of the trees as well as in the race of man. Our little day may run to seventy odd years, but in the eye of the Eternal the time is as short as that of the bud which first shows itself in March and with the November rain is cast once more into the red earth, there to mingle, even as we will, with its parent dust. So we think as we gaze up through the bare beech boughs to the blue sky seen in patches. The tree, in a sense, dies annually, and awaits the resurrection of spring. We pass away, and a new generation fills our footprints.



E. Max-Mills.

LOOSE AND MELANCHOLY BOUGHS.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CINGALESE BULLOCK BANDIE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose you a photograph of a type of conveyance very common here in Colombo. The natives take the greatest care of their teams, constantly washing them in the lake and at times decorating them with strings of blue



beads, or a big cowary hung round the horns. As you will see they are repaid by the sleek and prosperous look of their cattle.—J. P. L. STONEY, 2nd Worcestershire Regiment.

THE DUCK-BILLED PLATYPUS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph gives rather a better idea of this Antipodean animal than is generally to be found in natural history books, the majority of which portray it with far too widely-extended limbs, whereas, as you will notice here, little is to be seen of them beyond the feet. The fact that it both lays eggs and suckles its young, thus partaking of the nature of both bird and beast, makes it peculiarly interesting to naturalists as the only known link between the two. It makes its home like an otter in a bank, tunnelling up from the entrance under water some 30ft. or 40ft., which its powerful forearm muscles make nothing of, to a place where it can find a dry and well-drained burrow. Its food consists chiefly of insects, crayfish or "yabbess," which it bolts, hard shell and all, and it will stay for 10min. to 14min. at a time under water, searching the mud and stones for these delicacies with its duck-like bill. It makes a most fascinating little pet, becoming very tame, and squeaking with delight when fed. Its antics are a constant source of delight, though if care is not taken it will over-eat itself, seeming to have in captivity difficulty in digesting the hard crayfish shells. Its coat is, like the mole's, of an unusually silken and glossy texture, and the pace at which its powerful short legs with the wide web feet force it through the water is much faster than is commonly supposed.—W. A.

A PROTEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Allow me to protest in the strongest possible manner against the outrageous statement contained in your fashion article on March 11th, that the plumage of birds of prey "can be used without question even by members of the Bird Protection League." There is no such body as a "Bird Protection League," but the assertion is seriously prejudicial to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, to which, it may be supposed, the writer intended to allude, as it would indicate astounding ignorance and stupidity on the part of any person or body to seek to promote the destruction of some of the rarest and most invaluable of our birds. On the contrary, this society is doing everything in its power to preserve them, and any lady wearing their feathers would certainly be cut off from membership. The instance quoted of a hat trimmed with "an outspread kestrel" can only disgust anyone giving a thought to the matter or acquainted even in the slightest degree with the great utility of that farmer's friend. The kestrel, I may add, is protected all the year in many parts of England, and should be rigorously protected in every part if the cupidity of the plume trade is to be added to other forces at work against the survival of the bird.—L. GARDINER, Secretary, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, 3, Hanover Square, W.

BILLY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There came to us four years ago a herring-gull with a blood-stained reputation, so young, less than a year old, in pepper and salt quaker

plumage, and yet he had a long tale of murdered chickens scored against him by his late owner, who had found him a nestling fallen from the cliffs into the sea and taken him home to run with his farmyard fowls. Finding him a somewhat expensive pet he passed him on to us. Now we had no chickens, but we had two dachshunds, a dog and a bitch. With the former Billy proceeded to fall desperately in love, and it was the funniest thing in the world to see the pair together. I must say Dandy the dog fairly hated it. Billy, the instant he saw Dandy come out of the house, would rush across the garden uttering a weird crescendo cry. The dog would curl up in the sun, taking no notice. Then Billy would walk round him, bowing and crooning like a cock pigeon in spring. Still ignored by the dog, he would run off with a funny little dot-and-go-one-trot, returning immediately with a leaf or twig, which he deposited between the dog's paws, crooning as before. This was generally too much for poor Dandy. Up he got and waddled away with a disguised look on his face, Billy walking close beside still whispering sweet nothings in his ear. This the dog evidently thought was carrying things too far, and he would turn and snarl as one who should say "I have never built a nest before in my life, and I refuse to do so now." In a moment the scene changed; the lady scorned (I think Billy must have been a lady) with outstretched wings, wildly screaming, buffeted and prodded poor Dandy, till he tucked in his tail and fairly bolted for the house; this performance was repeated many times through the spring with slight variations. Billy hated the dachshund bitch as much as he loved the dog, and if he could catch her asleep stretched out in the sun on the lawn he would cautiously approach and dig her hard between the ribs: the effect—a yelp and back somersault by the bitch, followed by a blood-curdling yell from Billy, something between a laugh and a war whoop. Last summer Billy, now in splendid adult plumage, heliotrope and snowy white, with gleaming yellow bill, a tell-tale crimson Cain mark on lower mandible, formed a new alliance with a large rat. The two used to eat out of the same plate, and were very friendly. There was also a cat. The rat used to make it convenient to be absent when the cat dined with Billy, till one fine day the rat, through an error of judgment, was feeding with Billy when the cat arrived and seized him. Billy's rage knew no bounds, with outstretched wings, and piercing cries he pursued the cat demanding the release of the rat, though with no avail. I have since thought that Billy's efforts were not so disinterested as they appeared. He is very fond of dead rat, and, perhaps, he was fattening that rat with ulterior motives.

Billy did not always have things all his own way. At one time we had three old hens and a game cock; they were allowed to run in the garden sometimes, and Billy used to think it immense fun chasing the hens, till one day he was spied by the old cock, then it was Billy's turn to be chased, and didn't the feathers fly, till we rescued him from the infuriated husband. Billy's method of catching sparrows deserves mention, it was so neat, and was nearly always carried out in the same manner. He would advance towards a group of those wily birds, not direct, but with a casual sidelong dawdle, as if he had nothing particular to do, and was just strolling up to see what they were at. If they rose out of range, so to speak, he never made any effort to catch one; but if one in the general fluster passed his way, it was almost incredible the lightning rapidity with which he would take it on the wing, like a good field taking a catch high in the slips; one could hardly realise that he had brought it off, until you heard the poor little beggar squeal.

Sparrows we could spare him, but young blackbirds and thrushes we have always quarrelled over, and many is the chase we have had after him, trying to make him release a capture. It nearly always ended, I am sorry to say, in the disappearance of the captive in Billy's capacious maw, feathers and all; then he would stop running, and face us with an innocent look, as much as to say, "Why chase me, I have



nothing on me; pray search me." Truly a nice, engaging, bloodthirsty pet!
—DOUGLAS MOUNSEY.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IN FARMING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to your article "Can Townsmen Farm?" one enormous advantage that being brought up on his father's farm gives the young farmer is his knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of each field on the farm—in what weather

it is safe to plough such and such a bit, on what pasture ewes do well before lambing, and so on. It is impossible to apply scientific theories to particular farms without checking them very cautiously at first by local knowledge. Fortunately there are generally one or two old labourers who can put their master on the right track at starting if he will listen to them; and he will do well to do so, for if anyone has seen the effect on a crop of wheat of pulling about a stiff clay in the wrong kind of weather, he will never forget it.—B. V.

HORSE-TRAINING IN THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The twentieth-century Englishwoman is nothing if not athletic, but in some points we fancy she must still be content to give place to her Grecian sister of 500 B.C. How many Englishwomen, for all their pluck and skill, could show as good a right to the old Homeric epithet for heroes, "tamer of horses," as the warrior maiden, whose horse obediently kneels before her guiding spear in readiness for her to mount? Our illustration is from an early black-figured Greek vase, now in the great collection of the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. It shows, in the vivid and terse manner of the early vase-painters, an Amazon hastily approaching her horse, and the horse promptly kneeling that his mistress may mount, bareback and stirrupless, as was the fashion of the Amazon's cross-seat. This quaint vase-painting of the fifth century recalls a like incident on the sculptures of the Phigalian temple to Apollo. There, in the remote hill-country of Arcadia, the sculptors of the fourth century rendered a great battle between Greek warriors and Amazons, filling the temple frieze with the fury of struggling foes and the sweep of flying draperies. In the central slab of the frieze (now in the British Museum) the dying Amazon Queen sinks from her horse's back, too sore wounded to step to the ground, for all his care, in kneeling on both knees, for her dismounting. Again, we have the kneeling horse of the battlefield in the beautiful Nereid Monument, also now in the British Museum. The sculptures on that truly regal monument of the Lycian monarch Pericles include friezes representing various battle scenes. On one a wounded rider, his left hand on the horse's crupper and one foot feeling backwards for the ground, just manages to dismount, his horse the while kneeling down on the near fore leg. In these two cases of dismounting the horse kneels, either on both knees, or on the near fore leg. In our illustration he kneels, for the mount, on the off fore leg, and the Amazon clearly prepares to mount on the off side, in contradiction to the modern usage. This last instance shows that the trick was not limited to horses trained for women riders, as, indeed, is proved by the fact that it was included in the accomplishments of that far-famed charger, Bucephalus, horse of Alexander the Great. The custom seems to have been in somewhat general use in later days, for Plutarch, in the first century A.D., tells us how it was the habit of weakly and effeminate riders to teach their horses to kneel for mounting, a luxury of obvious value when stirrups were unknown, and seemingly adopted in those degenerate Roman days by the "effeminate," to whom even the aid of slopes or mounting-block offered too little assistance. The Amazon of our illustration may probably be placing her lance as a leaping pole for the spring, slight though it be, yet needed for her mount; and for this the leathern thong, often attached to the spear handle, would be useful. We commend the fifth century horsewoman, and her method of training her



horse, to the notice of those side-saddle riders to hounds who, when dismounted, now find themselves dependent on the nearest stump or bank, if unwilling to spoil the run of some fellow-rider, reluctantly chivalrous, yet bound to offer his help. In such emergencies the Greek Amazon and her horse were sufficient unto themselves.—G. M. G.

WAITING FOR THE KING.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I wonder if you will be able to find space for the enclosed picture of an elderly woman whose life has been one of constant and unremitting toil and poverty. I have seen not a little of her at varying intervals, and have never known her to complain of her lot, nor has she ever, to the best of my knowledge, asked for help or made any appeal to charity. The only thing which she is always glad to accept is tobacco, and she likes it strong. "It do pass away the time," she says, "and it sorter smoothes them rheumatics." When I met her, just before this photograph was taken, she was wet through and chilled to the bone, but nothing would induce her to come into the kitchen for shelter. "No," said the old dame, "I seed the King when 'e were Prince o' Wales, and I seed the Princess wi' 'im, and a bonnier, sweeter lady I did never set eyes on, not once afore or after; and now I've tramped nigh on a score o' miles just to see 'im again now 'e's a King, and to see 'er now she's a Queen, and I don't move afore I've seen 'em both! No, ma'am, thank'e kindly, I'll just bide where I be"—and so I left her smoking peacefully, and watching eagerly for the coming of her King and Queen.—N.

A LONELY HOME.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I came across this quaint old building, semi-farm and semi-cottage, of which I am sending you a picture, during a ramble in a very unfrequented part of one of the most picturesque of the Channel Islands. I could not ascertain accurately the date of its building; but, quite apart from the solidity of its workmanship and the beauty of its surroundings, a very pathetic interest seemed to be part and parcel of the place, whose owner, when quite a young girl, was the queen of beauty amongst her companions. She was also more than well-to-do for her class, and became engaged to be married to a young merchant sailor who sometimes visited the island. Everything was settled, and the day for the wedding fixed, the little home cleaned up and newly furnished; but on his way to fetch his bride the sailor lad was drowned, and for months and weeks, so a neighbour told me, Marie D—— lay almost at death's door. Her youth and healthy constitution prevailed in the end, and now for just on forty years she has lived alone, and devoted her life to the succouring of all who need a helping hand. She rarely speaks, and hardly ever leaves the house except when sent for to some case of sorrow or sickness. She is seen in the picture standing by the well, and on her face is written the calm which only a great sorrow can impart.—A.

RAT AND BLACKBIRD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest your correspondent "Notts" to know that my wife and I saw a very similar encounter to that which he describes. Some eight years ago, one Sunday, we had just finished lunch, when, on looking out of our dining-room window, I saw a rat pursuing a blackbird under a privet hedge which shut off our rubbish-heap from the carriage sweep. The blackbird crossed the drive, the rat making jumps at it. My wife ran out of the front door to keep the rat in view, and I out of the side door to get my Airedale from his run. The rat ran back to the rubbish-heap, which was chiefly composed of loose wood, and, by jumping on the heap and poking with a long stick, I made him bolt, when my terrier had him. In this case the rat did not get the bird. To the best of my belief this took place about the same time of year, and I know I thought it must have a nest somewhere.—COMMON-SENSE.